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THE
HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

VOL. I.

2000



THE
HISTORY OF ENGLAND

BY
THOMAS KEIGHTLEY,
AUTHOR OF THE HISTORY OF GREECE, THE HISTORY OF ROME,
OUTLINES OF HISTORY, ETC.


IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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P R E F A C E.

It is very remarkable, that, although there is a large class of persons who are anxious to possess an acquaintance with the history of their country, but who have not leisure to read voluminous works, few, if any, attempts have been made to supply their want. If we except mere school-books, the only moderately-sized and readable History of England is that of Goldsmith, in three volumes, octavo. It is very well known how slenderly furnished that most agreeable writer was with the knowledge requisite for the task he undertook; and it has been justly observed, that even had he possessed all the requisite information, so much additional materials have been brought to light within the last half-century as would make a new work necessary. It is proposed to supply the deficiency by the present History, which aims at giving, in a moderate compass, such an account of the affairs of England, from the earliest times down to the present day, as may satisfy the reasonable expectations of the class of readers above described.

The besetting sin of our historians is party-spirit. We

have no Thucydides or Thuanus. The partiality of Hume is discreditable to philosophy; but if he is partial on the one side, Brodie, Godwin and some late writers are fully as much so on the other. An impartial history (particularly of the House of Stuart) is undoubtedly still wanting in our literature. With respect to the present work, it would not be safe to say that it is perfectly free from error, or that prejudice may not have affected some of the statements; but I can truly assert that the influence of this principle has been imperceptible to myself, and most certainly I have never wilfully suppressed or distorted the truth.

My situation I conceive to be favourable for the discovery and delivery of truth in history. I belong to no sect or party, in religion or politics. A member of the Church of England, I give it in my mind a moderate preference to any other, without taking on me to assert that it is absolutely the best; in politics, it is to me personally a matter of perfect indifference what party has the disposal of the patronage of the state, for place or pension I neither desire nor want, and would not accept. Perhaps this forms as near an approach as may be to the paradoxical character of a good historian—that “il ne faudroit être d’aucune religion, d’aucun pays, d’aucune profession, d’aucun parti.”

The plan on which this history has been written is as follows. The events of the early periods and that of the Plantagenets have been related with such details as were

requisite to give them interest. The Tudor period, being that of the great transition in government and religion, has naturally been treated at tolerable length; while all the space that could be obtained within the prescribed limits has been devoted to the most important, the most interesting, annals of the House of Stuart. Contrary to the general practice, the portion allotted to the House of Brunswick is of less extent than those given to the two preceding periods. This plan I adopted on mature deliberation, before a single page of the work was written, and for the following reasons.

The probability is, that the greater number of the readers of the present work will never have leisure, or perhaps inclination, to read a more voluminous narrative. If, therefore, they did not meet the events of the early history here they might remain ignorant of them. The same reason applies with still greater force to the far more important period of the Tudors. Thus far however there is, comparatively speaking, little difference among protestant writers: but with the Stuarts commences the war of prejudice; the conflict of parties then began which has ever since continued, and to the narrator of it may justly be said,

*Periculose plenum opus aleæ
Tractas, et incedis per ignes
Suppositos cineri doloso.*


Here then, if anywhere, details are absolutely necessary; the testimonies of opposing parties must be produced, and

events be stated with all their circumstances. With the accession of the House of Brunswick the great political contest terminated. The history henceforth consists chiefly of the struggles of Whigs and Tories for place, with its patronage and emoluments, of debates in parliament, and of long and scientific foreign wars. All these, to be interesting, or even intelligible, must be narrated in long detail, and to do so would be quite subversive of the plan of the present work. With respect to wars, and battles by sea and land, I remember and approve of the advice on this head given by duke Schomberg to bishop Burnet; and I fully agree with Horace Walpole as to the wisdom of those who are not professional men, attempting to detail the extensive combinations and complex evolutions of the warfare of the eighteenth century. To confess the truth, I have tried in vain to comprehend the battles of Blenheim and Malplaquet in Coxe, and even those of Salamanca and Vittoria in Napier are not perfectly clear to me. There must be maps and plans, and a familiarity with military terms, which few readers possess, before we can understand them. The same holds good of naval engagements. There are moreover so many lives of Washington, Wellington, Nelson, and other generals and admirals, and so many narratives of the more interesting portions of the reigns of the Georges, that probably by many readers the bird's-eye view of them here given will be preferred to a more ample narrative. Should, however, this reasoning not prove satisfactory, I

must bow to the public decision, and extend the work in a future edition, if such should be called for.

I have seldom referred to any of the late writers on the History of England, except Mackintosh and Lingard. The profound, but rather rhetorical, reflections of the former I have occasionally transferred to my pages, and I have felt it incumbent on me to point out what I regard as the erroneous statements of the latter. Dr. Lingard's work is evidently connected with the efforts which the Church of Rome (of which he is a clergyman) is making to recover its ground in this country. His object is to prove that the Reformation was needless, as the preceding state of religion required no improvement,—and pernicious, as it was injurious to morality, and originated in vicious motives. On these points I think quite differently. At the same time I most freely acknowledge the industry, sagacity, clearness, animation of style, and other merits of Dr. Lingard. I have made him my principal guide in my history of the Plantagenets, and I think he has treated that of the Stuarts more impartially than any other historian of the present day. I bear him or his church no malice, but I must defend the interests of protestantism where it is unjustly assailed.

I may here inform the reader that the present history is not a mere compilation or abridgement. In the early part I have derived my materials directly from the Saxon Chronicle and the other original authorities. I have then taken



Lingard as my chief guide, (where his religion was not concerned,) but with a constant reference to the authorities. From the accession of the House of Tudor I have trusted only to contemporary writers, most of whom I have read, and all of whom I have frequently consulted. Instead of mere references, the very words of an authority are often placed in the text, by which practice space is saved, and the reader is enabled to judge for himself.

An edition of this work, in duodecimo, for the use of schools, has already appeared ; but it will be found that the additions made to the present one are very considerable, which it is hoped, with the superiority of form, paper and print, will render it acceptable to those for whose use it is designed.

T. K.

London, October 7th, 1839.

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THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD.

CHAPTER I.

BRITAIN UNDER THE ROMANS*.

B.C. 55—A.D. 450.

The Britons.—Landing of Cæsar.—Caractacus.—Boadicea.—Agricola.—State of Roman Britain.

IF in imagination we transport ourselves back in time for a space of about two thousand years, and view the isle of Britain, whose vales and plains are now blooming with the riches of cultivation, whose numerous cities and towns are animated with the activity of commerce and manufacture, whose fleets ride triumphant on the most distant oceans, and whose political institutions claim the admiration of the entire world,—a widely different scene will appear before us. We shall behold a region covered with

* Authorities :—Cæsar, Suetonius, Tacitus, Dion Cassius, the Augustan and following historians. See Appendix (A).

forests and spreading into marshes ; its inhabitants a rude, barbarous race, subsisting chiefly on the milk and flesh of their numerous herds of cattle, with little of agriculture, and few of the useful arts ; their towns mere inclosures in the woods ; their dwellings rude wicker cabins ; their only vessel the *coracle*, or boat of framework covered with skins. Nearly as low in the scale of humanity, as her colonists in after-times found the aborigines of the New World, were the original tribes of Britain when the legions of Rome first landed on her shores.

The indigenous inhabitants of the British isles were beyond doubt a portion of the Celtic race, whose seats on the mainland extended eastwards to the Rhine, and southwards far into Spain. The manners, customs, and institutions of the whole race were the same, only varying according to their geographical position ; the rudeness and barbarism declining as they came near more civilized countries. Like all races in a low state of culture, the Celts were divided into numerous independent tribes, and warfare evermore prevailed among them. These tribes were composed of three classes or orders ; the sacerdotal order, named Druids, the nobility, and the common people. All knowledge was in the hands of the Druids ; they were the priests, the philosophers, and the judges of the people ; those who refused to submit to their sentence were punished by excommunication, and as the Celtic race has been at all times prone to superstition, this weapon was as powerful in their hands as in those of the Romish clergy of after-ages. They were presided over by an arch-druid, who held his office for life ; they formed not a *caste* but an *order*, into which any one who was duly qualified might be admitted. The Druids had a peculiar system of physics and astronomy ; they taught in verses, which were never committed to writing ; their chief doctrine was that of the Metempsychosis, or passage of the soul into various bodies ; their religious system was dark and sanguinary. The order

enjoyed immunity from all taxes and imposts, and were not required to serve in war. The nobility exercised a despotic power over the inferior people, who were in a state of the most abject slavery; and the power of the Vergobret, or prince, of each tribe was absolute.

We thus see that the institutions of the Celtic tribes offered a striking resemblance to those of the East; the same degrading thralldom of the inferior people, the same exaltation of the sacerdotal order as in Egypt and India; even the employment of chariots in war was common to both regions. Hence many have derived the Celtic religion and institutions immediately from Asia; but this is a theory of which there is no need, and for which no satisfactory evidence has been offered.

The Celts of Britain had dwelt for ages in the seclusion of their isle, without any direct intercourse with the civilized nations round the Mediterranean, when at length the arms of Rome reached the opposite coast of Gaul. We are certainly told much of the direct trade to Britain of the Tyrians and their colonists of Carthage, but no proofs of this are to be found; and it is much more probable that the tin, iron, and other minerals of the island were conveyed overland to Spain or the south of Gaul, and there disposed of to the foreign traders. We are also of opinion that the mines of Britain were wrought by the Germans, who, under the name of Belgians, had colonized its southern coast, and not by the natives; and that it was in their large vessels, and not in the British *coracles*, that the commerce was carried on with the continent.

Such then was the state of Britain when (B.C. 55) Julius Cæsar, being engaged in his project of subduing Gaul as a means to the enslaving of his own country, thought that the invasion of an island which was regarded as beyond the limits of the world might tell to his advantage at Rome. He accordingly embarked with two legions, and having effected a landing near Deal on the coast of

Kent, defeated the natives who came to oppose him; but as it was not convenient for him to make any stay in the country, he granted the Britons peace on their promise of sending him hostages, and returned to Gaul. The following spring he landed with a force of five legions and two thousand horse: the Britons, who, laying aside their jealousies, had given the supreme command to Cassivelaunus, prince of the Trinobantians*, opposed without effect his passage of the Stour; he afterwards forced the passage of the Thames above Kingston, took Cassivelaunus' chief town, received the submission and hostages of several states, and having imposed tributes (which never were paid) quitted Britain for ever.

The civil war occupied the remainder of Cæsar's life; the policy of his successor, Augustus, was adverse to extending the already enormous empire, yet an intercourse was kept up with the British chiefs, some of whom made offerings on the Capitol, and they allowed duties to be levied on the commerce between Britain and Gaul†. The policy of Tiberius was similar to that of his predecessor. The frantic savage, Caligula, to whom the empire next fell, led the army, at the head of which he was plundering Gaul, to the coast opposite Britain (A.D. 36.); the war-like engines were set in order, and he issued his commands to the expecting troops to charge the ocean, and gather its shells as spoils due to the Capitol and Palatium.


At length, while the imperial throne was occupied by the feeble Claudius (43), the plan of conquering Britain was seriously resumed. An exiled British prince having applied to the emperor, orders were issued to A. Plautius, who commanded in Gaul, to invade the island. The Roman soldiers at first hesitated to embark. When they landed they found no enemy to oppose them, for the Britons had fled to their forests and marshes, thinking the

* See Appendix (B.)

† Strabo, iv. 5.

invaders would retire; but Plautius hunted them out, and subdued the country south of the Thames. The emperor himself soon after appeared in Britain, crossed the Thames, and routed an army of the natives; and having been in the island but sixteen days in all, returned and triumphed at Rome. The war in Britain was continued by Plautius and his lieutenant Vespasian, the future emperor. The command was afterwards (51) given to P. Ostorius, who carried his arms to the Avon and the Severn; he easily routed the Icenians; the resistance of the Silurians, under their gallant chief Caractacus (Caradoc), was more stubborn, but the legions were victorious in a great battle, in which the family of the chief became captives, and he himself seeking refuge with Cartismandua, queen of the Brigantians, was by her basely surrendered. They were led before the tribunal of Claudius, in the presence of assembled Rome. The British prince addressed the emperor in dignified and manly terms, and life and liberty were granted to him and his family.

The defeat and capture of Caractacus did not end the war; the Silurians still gave the Romans abundant employment, and Ostorius died worn out with care and anxiety. His successors Didius and Veranius carried on the conflict without much success. At length (62) the command in Britain was given to Suetonius Paulinus, an officer of great ability and courage. Regarding the isle of Mona (Anglesea), which was the chief seat of the Druids, as the centre of union and focus of resistance among the Britons, he resolved to reduce it. He led his army to the strait or the Menai; they beheld the opposite shore covered by armed Britons, among whom, with wild gestures, dishevelled locks, and brandishing flaming torches, ran women exciting them to courage, while the Druids stood apart, and with hands upraised to heaven devoted the invaders of their sacred isle. The Romans paused: at length, urged by the voice of their general, they advanced their




standards: the foe made but a brief resistance; the isle became the dominion of the victors, who built there a fort, and cut down the groves which so often had witnessed the human sacrifices offered by the Druids.

While Suetonius was thus engaged, he was summoned to quell an insurrection in the part called the Province. The king of the Icenians, when dying, had followed the Roman practice of making Cæsar heir, along with his two only daughters, hoping thus to secure their succession; but the Roman officers entered on his kingdom as a conquered country; they violated the princesses, beat and scourged their mother Boadicea, and plundered and enslaved the nobles. Joined by the Trinobantians, the Icenians flew to arms; the veterans who had been placed as a colony at Camalodunum (Maldon) having behaved with the usual violence and insolence of the Roman military colonists, were the first objects of attack. They were utterly destroyed; the legate Cerealis, who was leading his troops to their aid, was defeated. Suetonius, on coming by forced marches to Londinium (London), found it necessary to leave that flourishing city and the municipal town of Verulamium (St. Albans) to their fate, and seventy thousand persons were slaughtered in them by the Britons. The Roman general having drawn together a force of about ten thousand men, took up a position flanked by eminences, his rear being secured by a wood. The plain in front was soon filled with the troops and squadrons of the advancing foes; Boadicea, bearing her insulted daughters in her car, drove from nation to nation, exhorting them to avenge their injuries. The fight began; but victory soon took the side of skill and discipline; eighty thousand Britons, it was said, lay slain. Boadicea terminated her life by poison. Fire, sword, and famine then wasted various parts of the island.

The successors of Suetonius were inactive; Vespasian, when emperor, gave the command in Britain to Cerealis, who made war with success against the Brigantians, and

then to Frontinus, who subdued the Silurians. Vespasian next committed Britain to Cnæus Julius Agricola, a man who united in his person all the civil and military virtues. Soon after his arrival (80) he retook Mona, of which the Britons had repossessed themselves; he then devoted himself to conciliating the minds of the natives by a proper regulation of the tributes, and by introducing justice into the administration of affairs. After some time (82) he led out his troops and conquered the country to the æstuary of the Taus (Tweed?), and the next year (83) he built a line of forts from the firth of Forth to that of Clyde. He had some thoughts of invading Ireland, one of whose princes being expelled had sought his aid, and he was of opinion that a single legion and a few auxiliaries would suffice for the conquest of that island, whose people were even more barbarous than the Britons. The tribes north of the firths, who were called Caledonians, meantime (85) prepared for war; they assailed the Roman forts; they also fell on the ninth legion in the night, and were near overcoming it. Agricola resolved to invade their country; he advanced as far as the Grampians, which he found occupied by an army of thirty thousand warriors, which was receiving daily accessions of strength; each clan was led by its own chief, but the superior abilities of Galgacus were acknowledged by all, and the chief command was given to him. The infantry, armed with claymore and target, occupied the hills; the horse and war-cars moved about on the plain. But vain as ever were the arms and courage of the mountaineers against the discipline of the legions; the night beheld ten thousand Caledonian warriors lying dead on the plain. Agricola having advanced somewhat further into the country, and forced some of the tribes to give him hostages, led his army back to winter-quarters. His fleet meantime sailed northwards, and having succeeded in circumnavigating the island, returned to its usual station at Sandwich.



The conquests of Agricola gave the Roman dominion in Britain its greatest extent. All the native tribes south of the firths lived henceforth in peaceful submission to the Empire; the Roman language and manners were gradually diffused among them; colonies and municipal towns were spread over the island; war was unknown, except on the northern frontier, where the untamed Caledonians gave the legions occasional employment. Against their incursions the emperor Hadrian, when in Britain, built a wall from the Tyne to the Solway firth, and in the reign of his successor Antoninus a similar wall was constructed on the line of the forts between the firths raised by Agricola. The distance of Britain from the seat of government, and the security of its insular position, often excited its prefects to assume the imperial purple, and it was hence named "an isle fertile of usurpers (*tyrannorum*)."^{*} The two most celebrated of these usurpers were Carausius, at the end of the third, and Maximus at the end of the fourth century.

During the period of Roman dominion the zeal of the early Christians introduced the beneficent religion of the Gospel into Britain, as into all other parts of the empire, and it became the dominant faith throughout the Romanized part of the island. The names of Pelagius, a Welshman, and of Celestius, a North Briton, are famous on account of their theory of original sin and free-will, which caused them to be ranked among the heretics of those times*.

When internal decay, and the pressure of the barbarians from without, were menacing the existence of the empire,

* Pelagius maintained that Adam was naturally mortal and would have died whether he had sinned or not; that his sin affected only himself, and that children at their birth are as pure and innocent as he was at his creation; that the grace of God is not necessary to enable men to do their duty, overcome temptation and attain perfection, all which they can do by the freedom of their wills and the due exercise of their natural powers. It has been ingeniously supposed that the real name of Pelagius was Morgan, i. e. *Sea-born*, of which Pelagius is the Greek equivalent.

the troops were gradually withdrawn from the more remote provinces. The Picts*, as the people north of the firths were now called, being strengthened by the Scots of Ireland who had settled on the west coast of their country, began to pour in their ferocious hordes on the Roman province; they even reached and plundered London, and though defeated, renewed without ceasing their incursions. The Saxons from the opposite coast of Germany also made frequent plundering descents on the unwarlike province. The legions were at length totally withdrawn, and the Britons left to their own resources. Instead however of uniting against the common enemies, their princes and chiefs wasted their powers in contests for the supremacy of the island. At length (449) Gwerthern, or Vortigern, a British prince, being hard pressed by his rival for dominion, Aurelius Ambrosius (who claimed descent from Maximus), and harassed by the incessant inroads of the Scots and Picts, resolved on the fatal expedient of taking a body of the Saxon freebooters into his service, and he formed a treaty with two of their chiefs, named Hengist and Horsa.

* Dr. Lingard makes it nearly certain that Picts was only another name for the Caledonians. The most probable derivation of their name is from their custom of *tattooing* their bodies with the figures of animals; whence the Romans naturally called them the Painted (*Picti*). Those who regard them as a different race from the Caledonians, derive their name from the Teutonic *Fechter*, *fighter*, holding them to have been German or Scandinavian conquerors of the Caledonians.

CHAPTER II.

THE ANGLO-SAXON KINGDOMS*.

450—827.

The Germans.—Hengist and Horsa.—The Heptarchy.—The Britons.—Conversion of the Saxons.—Offa of Mercia.—**EGBERT** of Wessex.

THE Germanic or Teutonic race, which occupied Europe east of the Rhine, differed in language, religion, manners, and external appearance from their western neighbours the Celts. The love of liberty was a leading trait in their character; their obedience to their chiefs was free and voluntary; their religion, though a part of their being, was no slavish superstition; and the German quailed not, like the Celt, before a sacerdotal order. He held the female sex in honour, and nowhere was valour seen to pay homage to beauty as in the forests of Germany. The Germans further differed from the Celts in their passion for maritime enterprise; and while the latter had only their hide-covered coracles to creep along the shore†, the Germans ploughed the waves and faced the storm in strong, well-rigged ships‡. This led them, like the ancient Greeks, to combine piracy with trade, and we may suppose that after the Roman conquest of Gaul and Britain, and the consequent increase of luxury and wealth in these countries, the practice of

* Authorities :—Gildas, Nennius, Bede, Saxon Chronicle, Ethelward, Malmesbury, Huntingdon, Higden, Florence.

† The Venetians of Gaul, who fought with Cæsar on the sea, (B. G. iii. 8—16.) might seem to form an exception: but Strabo (iv. 4.) assures us they were Belgians, and these were always regarded as of Germanic origin.

‡ Among other reasons for regarding the navigation of the Germans and their northern kindred as homesprung, may be mentioned, that the names of a ship and all its parts are original terms of their languages, and not adopted from the Latin, Greek, or Punic.

piracy became more extensive among the maritime Germans.

These piratic tribes were the Jutes of the Cimbric peninsula, or Jutland; the Angles of Jutland and Holstein, and the Saxons who dwelt thence to the Rhine. Hengist and Horsæ, to whom Vortigern applied, were Ealdormen or chiefs of the Jutes, and the tradition is, that they came to his aid with three *chiule* (keels, *i. e.* ships), carrying sixteen hundred men. In imitation of the Roman practice of granting lands for military service, Vortigern bestowed on them the isle of Thanet, whither numbers of their countrymen repaired to them. Their arms were successful against the Scots and Picts, but when the Britons refused to comply with their further demands, they joined these northern tribes, and spread their ravages over the whole island. The Britons, led by Vortimer, the son of Vortigern, (which last they had deposed for his vices and incapacity,) now resisted with all their might, and in one battle (455), fought at Aylesford, Horsæ was slain; Hengist then associated with himself his son Eric, or Æsk, and a series of victories gave them possession of the whole of Kent, which was the first of the kingdoms formed by the invaders.

The British writers relate the following anecdotes in connexion with these events, but which probably are mere fictions to cover the disgrace of defeat. Hengist, they say, had a beautiful daughter named Rowena, whom he resolved to employ as a means to extend his influence over the British king. At a banquet given by Hengist, the fair Rowena advanced, bearing a golden goblet filled with wine, and presented it to Vortigern*, who, having thus an opportunity of contemplating her beauty, became en-

* Her words on this occasion were *Wæs heal, hlaford conung!* ("Health to thee, lord king!") from the first two of which was formed the old English *wassail*. The usual reply was *Drinc heal*.

amoured. He asked and obtained her of her father, and, as was to be expected, she used an injurious influence over his mind. Again, it is said that after the first war between the Britons and Saxons, a banquet, the scene of which was the celebrated Stonehenge, was held at the ratification of a peace; but the treacherous Hengist had made his companions conceal their *seaxes*, or short swords, beneath their garments, and on his crying out, as had been concerted, "Lay hold on your seaxes," (*Nimeth eure seaxes*,) they fell on and slew three hundred of the British nobles, and made Vortigern a prisoner*.

To return to the history. The Jutes were followed by the Saxons: a chief named Ella landed (477) with his three sons to the west of Kent, and defeated the Britons, and drove them into the wood of Andrede-leage†; he again (490) routed them, and took and razed their town of Andrede-ceastre. He then formed the kingdom of the South Saxons, which embraced the modern county of Sussex.

Another body of Saxons, led by Cerdic and his son Cynric, landed (494) to the west of the kingdom of the South-Saxons. They also were victorious against the Britons, and they gradually conquered the country from Sussex to the river Avon in Hampshire; they also passed the Thames, and subdued the country as far as Bedford. These were called the West-Saxons, and the kingdom of Cerdic was named Wessex.

The Saxons at this time also established themselves on the east coast, where they formed the kingdom of the East-Saxons, or Essex, of which that of the Middle-Saxons, or Middlesex, was a part.

The Angles now followed the example of their kindred

* These legends are related by Nennius; Gildas does not seem to have known them.


† The *Weald* (that is, *wood*) of Kent, Sussex, and Surrey is the remains of this forest.

tribes, and a large body of them occupied the country to the north of Essex, which was named from them East-Anglia. Here they were divided into two portions, named the North-folk (Norfolk), and the South-folk (Suffolk).

The country from the Humber to the firth of Forth was occupied by the British kingdoms of Deyfyr (Deira) and Bryneich (Bernicia), which were separated by the Tyne. The Jutes and Saxons are said to have invaded Bernicia in the time of Hengist, but without much success. At length (547) Ida, the Angle, landed with a large force at Flamborough Head, and he speedily made himself master of the country. It is not known how the conquest of Deira was achieved, but in 560 we find it under the dominion of the Angle Ella. Deira and Bernicia were afterwards, under the name of Northumbria, united under one monarch, and the kingdom thus formed was the most powerful in the island.

The country south of Deira and west of Anglia was regarded as *march*- or border-land toward the Britons (whence its name of Mercia). It was chiefly settled by the Angles; a great part of the population continued British, and it was divided into a number of states. Mercia was at first, it would seem, under the supremacy of Northumbria, but a fierce chief named Penda cast off the subjection (626); conquests were made from the Britons and West- and East-Saxons, and gradually Mercia became extensive and powerful.

Thus was formed what is usually called the *Heptarchy*, or *seven* states, founded by the German conquerors of Britain. This term has been objected to as not strictly correct, for there were at first *eight* instead of *seven* independent kingdoms; but Deira and Bernicia were so early united under one sceptre, that it seems to us a needless effort after exactness to change, as has been done, Heptarchy into Octarchy.



The Britons, or Welsh* as they were named by the conquerors, were thus driven back to the western side of the island. Their country, extending from Alcluyd or Dunbarton (i.e. Dun or fort of the Britons) on the Clyde to the south of Lancashire, separated from Northumbria by a range of mountains, was named Strathclyde and Cumbria; they also held, and their descendants retain, the country named Wales; and, in the south, Damnonia (Devonshire) and Cernaw (Cornwall), under the name of West-Wales, were long independent of the Saxons. Of the Britons of the conquered country, part fell in defence of their liberty and property; part sought refuge with their independent kindred; the remainder submitted, and were incorporated among the conquerors in various relations of freedom or servitude. It is remarkable, that in these parts their language went entirely out of use†; British terms form no portion of the modern English, few towns or lands retain Celtic names; the chief vestiges of the Celtic having once prevailed over the whole island are the appellations of some mountains and streams.

We have thus succinctly related the conquest of Britain as it has been transmitted to us by the oldest authorities. We must not, however, conceal the fact, that but one, the British Gildas, can be regarded as a contemporary, and that from him we obtain hardly any details; while Venerable Bede, our principal authority, was not born till two centuries after the conquest; and as Christianity, and with it letters, was not introduced among the Saxons much more than half a century before his time, we are left to suppose that the genealogies of chiefs and the songs of

* The Anglo-Saxon word *Wealh* (i. e. *Gael*) and its kindred terms in the other Teutonic dialects signify a *Gaul*, *stranger*, or *foreigner*. Thus the Germans at the present day call Italy *Wälschland*, and the Italians *Wälscher*. The Valais in Switzerland, the Walloons, etc., are all of the same origin.

† See Appendix (C).

bards were the materials for the history of the conquest and the succeeding century and half. How little real history these usually transmit is well known; in the present case, for instance, the numbers of the invaders are ludicrously small, and the names of the first leaders have such a mythic air, as to lead some inquirers even to doubt of their actual existence*. Nor are the tales of the British bards more credible than those of the Saxons, and the fame and the existence of their renowned Arthur are at least as problematic as those of Hengist and Horsa.

To proceed: all Britain was thus divided among the Anglo-Saxons, as we call the conquerors; the Britons, or Welsh; and the Picts and Scots, north of the Roman wall. Ceaseless warfare, it will readily be supposed, prevailed among all these independent states; and the Anglo-Saxons, little heeding their community of origin, turned their arms as freely against each other as against the Welsh or the Picts. Milton has said that these conflicts are as undeserving of notice as "the wars of kites or crows, flocking and fighting in the air," and this remark certainly holds good with respect to the general reader, though it may not apply with equal force to the philosopher or the antiquary. We will therefore content ourselves with selecting some of the most prominent events in each of the kingdoms during the space of about two centuries.

We shall begin with Kent, as it was in this kingdom that Christianity was first introduced among the heathen Saxons†. The following was the occasion. Gregory (who

* Hengist and Horsa both signify *horse*; the white horse is the arms of Kent and Hanover; the ancient Germans, according to Tacitus, kept sacred white horses, from whose neighing they took omens. (See Palgrave, *Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, Part i. p. 395.) We do not, however, think that their names present any difficulty. Wolf (*Ulf*) and Bear (*Beorn*) were names of real persons: why then object to Horse?

† National hatred on one side, and contempt on the other, had probably prevented, or rendered unavailing, any attempts on the part of the British Christians to convert the Saxons.

was afterwards pope, and named the Great,) happening when a young man to pass through the slave-market at Rome, his attention was caught by some boys, with fair, long hair and blooming complexions, who were there exposed for sale. He asked the slave-dealer of what country they were; he was told that they were Angles. "With reason," said he, "are they so called, for they are fair as *angels*, and would that they might be cherubim in heaven! But from what province of Britain are they?" "From Deira." "Deira!" said he; "that is good; they must be delivered from the wrath (*de ira*) of God. But what is the name of their king?" "Ella." "Ella! Allelujah then should be sung in his dominions." Gregory forthwith resolved to go on a mission to Britain; he obtained the pontiff's consent, but the people of Rome would not suffer him to expose his life to such peril. At length he ascended the papal throne himself, and he then resolved to make no delay in proposing the truths of the Gospel to the pagan Saxons. He selected a monk named Augustine, whom with forty companions he sent to Britain (596)*.

The conjuncture was favourable. Ethelbert, king of Kent, was married to a Christian princess, Berta, sister of Caribert, king of Paris; when, therefore, the missionaries landed in the isle of Thanet, and sent to solicit an interview with the king, it was readily granted; but Ethelbert, fearful of magic, would only receive them in the open air. They advanced, bearing aloft a silver cross, and a banner displaying the image of Christ, and chanting litanies; then addressing the king, they explained to him the tenets of their faith. Ethelbert hesitated to embrace the new doctrine, but he gave them leave to preach it to his people, and assured them of his protection. Soon, however, the king and his court became converts, and his example so

* Bede, i. 25.

wrought on his subjects that not less than ten thousand of them were baptized on one Christmas. He gave up his own palace to the missionaries, and the church which they built adjoining it occupied the site of the present cathedral of Canterbury. Sebert, king of Essex, the nephew of Ethelbert, readily embraced the Christian religion (604), and on the site of an ancient temple of Apollo, in a wild desert island formed by the branches of a small river that fell into the Thames to the west of London, and which was named Thorney (Thorn-isle) from its appearance, he built a church dedicated to St. Peter,—the present Westminster Abbey. He also built in London, on the site of a temple of Diana, a cathedral dedicated to St. Paul.

On the death of Ethelbert (616), however, the new faith seemed likely to decline; his son and successor Eadbald, smitten with the charms of the widowed queen, made her his wife, and returned to the religion of his fathers. The sons of Sebert also renounced the new faith. Mellitus bishop of London and Justus bishop of Rochester returned to Gaul, and Laurentius the successor of Augustine was preparing to follow their example. Ere he departed he resolved to make one more effort to reclaim Eadbald. The night before he was to set out for the continent, he caused his bed to be made in the church. In the morning he came to take leave of the king, and stripping his back and shoulders, showed them bloody with the marks of recent stripes. Eadbald asked who had dared thus to treat a person in his station. He was told they were the chastisement inflicted on him, in the dead of the night, by the prince of the apostles, for his having thought of abandoning his flock. The king was terrified; he put away his queen, suppressed idolatry, and became a most zealous Christian*.

* As this is one of the first Romish miracles in English history, we must make a few remarks on this subject. Of the fact above related we see no reason to doubt, though most surely St. Peter was not the flagellator. From

Edwin, king of Northumbria, was married to Ethelburga, daughter of Ethelbert, and at the request of her brother Eadbald he allowed (625) a missionary named Paulinus to preach in his dominions. Edwin's had been a life of vicissitude; he was the son of Ella and heir to the crown of Deira, but Ethelfrith, king of Bernicia, who had married his sister, expelled him when an infant from his inheritance. When Edwin grew up he sought refuge with Redwald, king of East-Anglia, where, from his manners and conduct he gained universal favour. Ethelfrith sent repeatedly, offering large rewards to Redwald if he would kill him or give him up. The Anglian prince at first steadfastly refused; at length he began to waver. Edwin was informed of his danger, but he refused to fly; the queen then strongly interested herself in his favour, and Redwald resolved to remain in the path of honour. Knowing that a war must ensue, he resolved to anticipate Ethelfrith, and he invaded his dominions. Ethelfrith fell in battle against him, (616) and Edwin became king of Northumbria, where he so distinguished himself by the strict administration of justice, that it was said that during his reign a woman or child might openly carry a purse of gold without danger. The king of Wessex, unable to face Edwin in the field, resolved to have him murdered. The assassin, named Eomer, came as an ambassador, and when the king stretched forth his hand to welcome him, he suddenly drew his sword and attempted to stab him; but Lilla, one of the king's officers, seeing the act, threw himself before the sword, which passed through his body and wounded the king. The fright of the queen brought on

the earliest ages to the present day, that "the end sanctifies the means" has been the maxim of the church of Rome. The fraud, as was apparently the case in the present instance, was often well intended, but still it was fraud, and therefore is to be condemned. The preceding narrative is given at full length by Venerable Bede. Dr. Lingard thus softens it: "On the morning of his intended departure he made a last attempt on the mind of Eadbald; his *representations* were successful." Surely this is not fair-dealing in a historian.

premature labour; the safety of herself and her babe was ascribed to the prayers of Paulinus, and with Edwin's permission the infant was baptized. A victory which he gained over the treacherous king of Wessex also contributed to dispose him to embrace the new faith, and after divers conferences with Paulinus, he called the great council of his realm to take the matter into consideration (626).

The first who spoke was Coifi, the chief priest. He declared himself satisfied of the nothingness of the gods whom he had hitherto served; "For if," said he, "they had power to bestow blessings, I, who have always served them, should have been most highly favoured, whereas the contrary is the case." One of the nobles then spoke, likening the soul to a sparrow, which in the mid winter, when the king is enjoying himself with his lords by the fire, flies into the warm hall where they are sitting, and having flitted for some time around it, again goes out into the storm at another door. "Thus," added he, "we know nought of the origin or end of the soul, and if the new doctrine can give us any certainty, we should embrace it." All assented; Coifi then proposed that the temple of Godmundingham, at which he officiated, should be destroyed, and offered to commence the profanation. It was the law among the Saxons that the priests should never carry arms, and should only ride on mares; but Coifi now, to prove his change of faith, mounted a war-steed, girt himself with a sword, and grasping a lance galloped on to the temple. The people thought him mad, and their amazement increased when they saw him hurl his lance against the fane; no opposition, however, was made to the demolition, and the number of the converts became so great, that for thirty-six days Paulinus was engaged from morning to night in baptizing them. The Christian faith was gradually adopted in the other states, and in zeal and

piety the Anglo-Saxons might vie with any people of the time*.

Of the political events of this period the following are the most deserving of note. In the year 626 Penda mounted the throne of Mercia, at the age of fifty, and he reigned for thirty years. He was a man of a violent, tyrannic character, ever at war with his neighbours. Edwin, king of Northumbria, and his successor Oswald fell in battle against him. Penda himself was slain at last in the battle of Winwid-feld, near Leeds, fought against Oswio of Northumbria (655): his successor Peada was a Christian, and the Mercians embraced the faith of their king. The greatest of the Mercian monarchs was Offa, who warred with success against the British princes, and drove them out of the plain country; to secure his conquests he ran an entrenchment, still named Offa's Dyke, from the mouth of the Dee to that of the Wye. Offa also conquered Kent and Essex; Wessex and Northumbria submitted to him, and by treachery and murder he gained East Anglia. For Ethelbert, king of that country, wishing to espouse one of his daughters, went in person to his court at Tamworth, in reliance on Offa's honour, though they had long been at enmity (792). But Offa's queen said to him, "Now you have your old enemy in your power, whose kingdom you have so long coveted;" and Offa caused him to be assassinated. The princess, however, had time to give the Anglian nobles warning, and they made their escape, but Offa entered and conquered the kingdom. The power and fame of Offa were so great, that the emperor Charlemagne entered into friendship and alliance with him. Offa reigned forty years; after his death (794) Mercia rapidly declined.

The supreme power in Britain was reserved for the

* All the preceding details are furnished by Bede, ii. 12, 13.

royal line of Wessex. It had already produced in Ina, the ablest legislator who had as yet appeared among the Anglo-Saxons. At this time Egbert, a youth of the race of Cerdic, being deemed by the people to have a better right to the throne than Beortric who occupied it (784), was an object of suspicion to that monarch, and to save his life he took refuge with Offa, king of Mercia. Beortric sought and obtained the hand of Offa's daughter Edburga (787), but his request for the surrender of Egbert was refused. This young prince however, not deeming himself secure, retired to the court of Charlemagne. Edburga, who was a woman of the most vicious character, frequently made her husband put his nobles to death: at times she was herself the agent; and one day, when she had mixed a cup of poison for one of the nobles, the king by mistake partook of it and died. The people rose, and drove Edburga from the country, and abolished the title of Queen*; she went to France, thence to Italy, and king Offa's daughter finally died a common beggar at Pavia.

Egbert now returned from France (800), and occupied the vacant throne. He concluded a peace with Mercia, and having devoted some years to the improvement of his paternal realm, at length (809) he turned his arms against the Britons of Cornwall, whom in the space of fourteen years he reduced to submission. The power of Egbert now excited the jealousy of the Mercian king, and a war broke out; but the Mercians sustained a great defeat (823) at Ellandune (Wilton), and Egbert then sending his son with an army into Kent, drove out of it the prince who governed it under the Mercians, and the people joyfully submitted to his rule. The East-Anglians revolted, and put themselves under the protection of Egbert. The king of Mercia led an army against them, but he fell in battle; the same was the fate of his successor; and Egbert finally

* Hence instead of *queen* we shall find the term *lady* employed.



(827) invaded and conquered Mercia. He then turned his arms against the Northumbrians, who submitted at his approach. He finally conquered the Britons of Wales, and the whole island south of the firths acknowledged the authority of the king of Wessex.

We will terminate this portion of the early history by a few observations.

The resemblance is very striking between the heroic age of Greece and the early Anglo-Saxon period of Britain. In both the form of government is regal, and confined to particular families, who derived their lineage from the deities worshiped by the people; for if the Grecian *Basileus* traced his pedigree up to Zeus, the Saxon *King* drew *his* down from Wodin (Odin), the monarch of the northern heaven. The same qualities of mind and body were required in the sovereigns of both people. The king was the source of law, and the administrator of justice, in Britain as in Greece; and if in one country he was aided by a *Bulé*, or senate, composed of the nobles or chieftains of his realm, the same appearance is presented by the other in its Witena-gemot (*Meeting of the Witan*, i. e. Wisemen), or great council*.

The leaders of the Anglo-Saxons were at first called Ealdormen (*Aldermen*), or elders†. When they took the title of King‡, that of Ealdormen was retained for the inferior chieftains, or the governors of districts and towns. Some of the Anglo-Saxon kings assumed a still higher title, that of Bretwalda, or Ruler of Britons, and those who held it are supposed to have enjoyed some kind of supremacy over the different states of the island§.

* See History of Greece, Part I. ch. ii.

† As the Grecian chiefs were called *γέροντες*, Hom. II. ii. 53.

‡ *King* is cognate to the Persian *Khân*, and perhaps to the Celtic *Caen* (head).

§ The Bretwaldas were Ella of Sussex, Ceawlin of Wessex, Ethelbert of Kent, Redwald of East-Anglia, Edwin, Oswald, and Oswio of Northumbria, and Egbert of Wessex.

CHAPTER III.

KINGS OF WESSEX SOVEREIGNS OF ENGLAND *.

The Danes.—**ETHELWULF.**—**ETHELBALD.**—**ETHELBERT.**—**ETHERED.**—
ALFRED THE GREAT.—**EDWARD I. (the Elder).**

EGBERT. 800—836.

At the time when Egbert mounted the throne of Wessex the Anglo-Saxons had been for three centuries and a half the occupants of Britain. During all this time they had been divided into separate independent states ; and, as we have seen, warfare against each other or the original natives prevailed almost without intermission. A new and most formidable foe, of their own race and kindred, was now about to appear, and a closer union among their states was required. It would almost seem that Egbert had foreseen this necessity, for we are told that on his accession he gave the name of England (Angle-land) to his realm ; and as only the West-Saxons were his subjects, we may infer that he even then aspired to the monarchy of the whole island. It was probably at the court of Charlemagne, and in imitation of that great monarch, that he formed this plan of extensive dominion.

The foes with whom the English were now to contend were the Northmen (the people of Denmark and Norway), named by them the Danes. Like all nations in a low state of culture, the Danes had probably lived for centuries with little knowledge of any country but their own ; and though they may have possessed the art of ship-building from time immemorial, and had navigated their own stormy seas without fear, we have no accounts of their pillaging

* Authorities : Saxon Chronicle, Ethelward, Malmesbury, Huntingdon, &c.



the coasts of the more southern countries till about the period at which we are now arrived. Some internal changes, of which we are uninformed, may have taken place at this time in Scandinavia; excess of population may have caused want: a spirit of adventure may have sprung up from some unknown cause; at all events we shall henceforth find the fleets of the Vikingar, or northern pirates, annually devastating the coasts of France and England. They were still heathens, and the martial character of their religion tended to augment their ferocity.

Their first appearance in the latter country is said to have been in 787, in which year they landed from three ships on the coast of Dorset; and when the reeve of the next town attempted to make them prisoners, they slew him, and escaped to their vessels. In 793 and 794 they made descents on Northumbria, and plundered the monasteries at Lindesfarne and Wearmouth. Probably from having become better acquainted with the political state of the island, they now directed their efforts against the south coast, and formed alliances with the Britons of Devon. In 833 they landed from thirty-five ships at Carrun (Char-mouth) in Dorset, where king Egbert gave them battle. The slaughter was great on both sides, but the invaders kept the field. Two years after (835) a large body landed, and, being joined by the men of Devon, invaded Wessex; but Egbert met and defeated them at Hengist-dune. The year after his victory king Egbert died, leaving two sons, Ethelwulf and Athelstan, of whom the former succeeded to the crown of Wessex, the latter obtained Sussex, Kent, and Essex.

ETHELWULF, 836—858.

The landings of the Danes on the east and south coast were now periodical, but they were in general stoutly

resisted. Still the spoil they were enabled to carry off encouraged them, and every year their number increased. In the spring of 851 they sailed up the Thames, took and pillaged London and Canterbury, and having defeated the king of Mercia, advanced into Surrey: but at Ac-lea (Ockley) they were encountered by king Ethelwulf and the West-Saxons, and routed with prodigious slaughter.

While his kingdom was thus endangered, king Ethelwulf, urged by superstition, undertook (855) a pilgrimage to Rome, where he remained for twelve months. On his way home he married Judith, daughter of Charles the Bald, king of France. He had been previously married to Osberga, daughter of a nobleman named Oslac, who had borne him five sons, Athelstan (now dead), Ethelbald, Ethelbert, Ethered, and Alfred. The last was his favourite; and the year before, though he was but five years of age, he had sent him to Rome, where Pope Leo IV. consecrated him as king, and made him his godson. During the absence of Ethelwulf, Ethelbald, his eldest son, attempted to occupy the throne; and on the return of the king a civil war was on the point of breaking out; but it was happily prevented by the moderation of Ethelwulf, who, contenting himself with the kingdom which had been held by his brother Athelstan, gave up Wessex to his son (856). Ethelwulf died soon after (858), and was succeeded in Sussex, Kent, and Essex, by his second son Ethelbert.

ETHELBALD, 858—860.

Ethelbald gave great scandal to his people by marrying his step-mother Judith, but he divorced her on the remonstrances of Swithun*, bishop of Winchester. He died after a short reign, and was succeeded by his brother Ethelbert.

* This is the bishop whose day is supposed to have so much influence on the succeeding weather.

ETHELBERT, 860—866.

The Danes now resumed their ravages. They stormed and burned Winchester (860); but as they were returning to their ships laden with booty, they were fallen on and routed by the men of Berks and Hants. In 865 they settled themselves, as the Jutes had formerly done, in the isle of Thanet. Their neighbours of Kent gave them a large sum of money to purchase peace, but the faithless Danes took the money and then ravaged the country.

ETHERED, 866—871.

The reign of Ethelbert also was short. On his death (866) his next brother, Ethered, mounted the throne, and, in the very year of his accession, a large army of Danes, led by three brothers named Halfdan, Hingvar, and Hubba, the sons of the famous northern hero Ragnar Lodbrok, landed in East-Anglia*, the people of which made peace with them and supplied them with horses. The pirates thus mounted crossed the Humber and poured into Northumbria, where the people were at discord among themselves, having deposed their rightful king Osbert, and given the throne to Ella, a man not of the royal line. The two rivals, however, joined their forces against the invaders, and attacked them at York, which city they had taken; but the Northumbrians were defeated; Osbert was slain, and Ella taken and put to death with torture. The Danes then (868) entered Mercia, and took the town of Nottingham. At the request of the king of Mercia, Ethered led an army to oppose them, but they seem to have kept possession of the town. They next (870) spread into Lindsey (Lincolnshire), where they were bravely resisted, but their numbers and their ferocity finally prevailed. They

* Their father had been taken the year before and put to death by the Northumbrian chief Ella, and they now came to avenge him.

plundered and burned the monasteries of Medhamstede (Peterborough) Croyland, Ely, Thorney, and Ramsey, and then invaded East-Anglia. Edmund, the king of that country, a prince celebrated for his virtue and piety, offered them a gallant resistance, but he was defeated, and, being hotly pursued, was discovered, and dragged from his place of concealment. The Danes bound him to a tree, and, on his steadfast refusal to renounce his faith, they beat and abused him, shot their arrows at him, and at length, by the order of Hingvar, struck off his head*. The next year (871) the Danish host advanced to Reading in Wessex: the king and his brother Alfred led an army to oppose them, but were defeated. Four days after they engaged them again, with success, at Escisdune (Aston?), and in about a fortnight after the two armies again encountered at Basing, where victory was with the Danes, who were once more successful in a battle fought two months later at Morton in Berks. The king died the following Easter of a wound he had received, leaving his throne to his brother Alfred, a young man twenty-two years of age, who had greatly distinguished himself in the wars of this time†.

ALFRED THE GREAT, 871—901.

Alfred first engaged the Danes at Wilton, and no less than nine battles, besides numerous skirmishes, took place in the course of this year. A treaty was at length concluded, and the heathens evacuated Reading and moved to London. Burhed, king of Mercia, to whom London belonged, then made a treaty with them, and they removed to Lindesey; but finding little to plunder in this

* The place of his interment was named Bury St. Edmund's, for he was canonized as a martyr.

† We possess a contemporary Life of this prince by Asser, bishop of Sherborne.

wasted country, they poured, regardless of the treaty, into Mercia, and took a station at Repton (873), whence they spread their ravages over the country. King Burhed, despairing of being able to resist them, left his kingdom and retired to Rome, (874,) and the Danes made one of his thanes king, on condition of being their vassal, and resigning when they required. The next year (875) they divided their forces; one division, under Halfdan, invaded and conquered Northumbria; the other fixed itself at Cambridge, whence it moved the following year (876) and came unexpectedly to Wareham in Dorset; but Alfred forced them to a treaty, and they swore in their most solemn mode (that is, on their holy ring or bracelet) to depart, giving some of their chief nobles as hostages. Yet, heedless of all this, they made a rapid movement (877) and gained possession of Exeter; but Alfred besieged them, and forced them to a new treaty, which was better kept. They retired to Gloucester, where they divided a part of the land among themselves. In the midst of the following winter (Jan. 6, 878), however, they secretly collected their forces, entered Wessex, and seized the town of Chippenham, whence they ravaged the kingdom far and wide; some of the inhabitants fled over the sea, the rest submitted. The spirit of the king alone remained unbroken; but he could not collect troops, and he was forced to lay aside all marks of royalty, and to conceal himself under mean disguises.

It is related that he took refuge for some time in the cottage of one of his cowherds, to whom his person was unknown. As he was one day sitting by the fire adjusting his bow, arrows, and other arms, the cowherd's wife set some cakes on the hearth to bake, naturally expecting that he would have an eye to them. She then went about her other household affairs, but happening to turn about she saw that the cakes were all burnt. She rated the king well, telling him he was ready enough to eat them, and so

might have minded them. Alfred bore her reproaches with patience, and his quality remained undiscovered.

Gradually Alfred was enabled to collect a small body of faithful followers, with whom he retired to a bog or morass formed by the waters of the Thone and Parret in Somerset*. Here, on about two acres of firm land, they raised a habitation, and led the life of outlaws, supporting themselves by plundering excursions against the enemy and those who had submitted to them, and also by hunting the deer of the forest and taking the fish of the streams. His abode here, however, was not long; the men of Devon had defeated and slain the Danish chief Hubba when he landed on their coast, and captured the Raven, the magic standard in which the heathens placed such confidence†. Alfred soon felt himself sufficiently strong to venture on engaging the Danish army, but he resolved previously to ascertain its condition and situation. For this purpose, it is said, he disguised himself as a gleeman or minstrel, and entered their camp. The rude warriors received and entertained him joyfully for his music and songs; he was brought to make melody before Guthrum their leader, and allowed to go where he pleased all through the camp. After a stay of some days he retired, having obtained the knowledge he wanted‡. He then summoned the men of Somerset, Wilts, and Hants to meet him at Brixton, on the verge of the forest of Selwood, and they came in great force, and mightily rejoiced to behold their king again in arms. He led them thence to Ethandune (Eddiston?) and took a position in front of the enemy. A fierce and

* It was thence named *Æthelinga-ige*, or Isle of Nobles; now *Athelney*.

† It was woven, says Asser, in one afternoon, by the three daughters of Ragnar Lodbrok: if victory awaited the army, it would appear like a live raven flying; if defeat impended, it would hang down and droop.

‡ We question the truth of this story. It is not told by Asser, who could hardly have omitted it (we first meet with it in Ingulf and Malmsbury); it answered no purpose, as no attack was made on the camp; it seems merely a repetition of that of Anlaf, soon to be noticed.

bloody engagement terminated in favour of the English; the Danes fled to their entrenched camp, where Alfred blockaded them for a space of fourteen days. A treaty was then agreed to; the Danes gave hostages, and engaged to evacuate Wessex; and Guthrum pledged himself to receive baptism, which rite was performed about three weeks after, the king being his sponsor. As was usually the case in these times, most of the Danes followed the example of their chief. It was further agreed that Guthrum should settle with his people in East-Anglia and a part of Mercia, acknowledging Alfred as his superior lord. Guthrum remained faithful to Alfred as long as he lived; his subjects laid aside their predatory habits, and devoted themselves to agriculture. A Danish prince named Guthred was, by means of the bishop of Lindesfarne, made king of Northumbria, and he also acknowledged the supremacy of Alfred. Ethelred, who was married to the king's daughter Ethelfleda, governed Mercia as alderman; Wessex and its dependencies were under his own more immediate rule.

During fifteen years the kingdom had tolerable repose, and in these years Alfred employed himself in providing the means of defence. He rebuilt or fortified London, and other towns which had been ruined by the Danes; he established a militia, assigning a rotation of military duty to all his subjects; and greatly increased and improved his navy, which he stationed in different divisions round the island.

The efforts of the Northmen were at this time chiefly directed against the Netherlands; but in the year 893 a fleet of two hundred and fifty ships entered the Rother in Kent, and going up it for four miles, landed, and formed a strong camp at Apuldre, in which they remained for a twelvemonth*. At the same time a famous pirate, named

* The whole of this district is now occupied by Romney marsh.

Hastings*, sailed up the Thames with eighty ships, and raised a fortress at Middel-tun (Milton). The king came with his forces, and took a station between the two armies. The army at Apuldre then set out secretly and plundered part of Wessex; but Alfred came up with and defeated them at Farnham, and took all their booty. They fled over the Thames, and entrenched themselves on the Colne, where they were besieged by the king. But meantime the Danes of Northumbria and East-Anglia, who had joined their countrymen, put to sea with one hundred and forty ships, and invaded the coast of Devon; and while Alfred returned to its defence, the foreign Danes raised a fortress at Benfleet, on the other side of the Thames. The king's troops, however, stormed and took this camp; among the captives were the wife and two sons of Hastings, to whom Alfred generously gave their liberty. The Danes then pushed boldly across the island, and came to the Severn, where they formed a strong camp; a large army of English and Welsh besieged it; the Danes had eaten all their horses, and many of them had died of hunger, when they burst out, and with great loss forced a passage and returned to Essex. Here, being reinforced, and having secured their wives, ships, and property in East-Anglia, they set out again, and marched day and night till they came to Chester, which was lying deserted. The king's troops, which had been unable to overtake them, besieged them for a few days, and then retired. They stayed there for the winter, and then (895) set forth again, and came to the isle of Mersey, on the east coast of Essex, whence they sailed (896), and going up the Thames towed their vessels twenty miles up the Lea, and formed a strong camp. The king, in the harvest, came and encamped near London, in order that the citizens might get in their corn in safety.

* It is a mistake to say that Hastings derived its name from this chief; the Hestingi of the coast of Sussex are mentioned in 771. See Lingard, i. p. 119, 4th edit.

One day, as he was riding along the Lea, he observed a spot which might be secured, so that the Danes could not bring down their ships. He forthwith set about raising forts on each side at that place; but the Danes, aware of his object, broke up suddenly, and marching to the Severn, again raised a fortress there, in which they passed the winter; and the next summer (897) they went thence to Northumbria and East-Anglia, and having gotten ships sailed away to France. They still, however, harassed the south coast of England; but Alfred, who had built ships of war on an improved plan of his own, destroyed several of their vessels. As a piece of wholesome severity, he hanged the crews of two of them which had been driven ashore on the coast of Sussex.

As we are now approaching the close of this great monarch's reign, we will pause, and take a brief survey of his efforts to improve his people in the intervals of war.

It will not surprise any one who is acquainted with the general ignorance and barbarism of those times, to hear that Alfred, though the favourite son of a king, had attained the age of twelve years before he learned to read. When he was at that age, his mother one day showed him and his brothers a volume of Anglo-Saxon poetry, and said that the book should be his who first could read it. Alfred, who had always loved to listen to the lays of the minstrels, and whose curiosity was excited by the fine illuminated or coloured letter with which the book commenced, asked eagerly if she would really give it. She assured him that she would; he then took the book, sought out a teacher, and soon made good his claim to it. The next book that he read was a collection of Psalms: this he always carried about with him, and it was his chief source of consolation in his retreat in Athelney. When his kingdom was settled he began to study Latin, and he translated from it the works of Orosius, Boethius, and Venerable Bede, and other pieces. His great object was to

diffuse sound knowledge among his people; he therefore refused to promote the uneducated to office, and he invited eminent scholars from all parts, and gave them honours and dignities. His labours were not without fruit. "When I took the kingdom," says he, "very few on this side of the Humber, very few beyond, not one that I recollect south of the Thames, could understand their prayers in English, or could translate a letter from Latin into English;" yet he lived to thank God that those who sat in the chair of the instructor were then capable of teaching. By a regular distribution of his time into three equal parts, for repose, business, and study, this great prince, though labouring under a severe internal malady, was enabled to produce more literary works than any man of his time*.

Alfred died in 901, in the fifty-third year of his age, and thirtieth of his reign. His character has, down to the present day, been the theme of universal applause, as the nearest approach to perfection in a man possessed of power that our nature has yet exhibited. His civil and military talents were alike great; his religion was simple, sincere, and unostentatious; his love of truth and justice were remarkable: his passion for the acquisition and diffusion of useful and valuable knowledge was strong; he especially encouraged trade and mercantile adventure. The fame of his wisdom, justice, and love of his country, was so prevalent among the succeeding generations as to cause the most valuable institutions to be ascribed to him, though without reason or proof. But though we must thus derogate from his fame as a legislator, the character of Alfred as the good and great monarch remains one with which that of the emperor Marcus Aurelius can alone be placed in competition.

* See Appendix (D).

EDWARD I. (THE ELDER). 901-925.

Edward, named the Elder, to distinguish him from his successors of the same name, was chosen by the Witan to succeed his father Alfred. But Ethelwald, the son of the late king Ethelbald, resolved to assert his claim to the throne; and assembling his partisans, he took possession of the town of Wimburn in Dorset. The king marched against him, and Ethelwald, though he vaunted that he would conquer there or die, stole away secretly, and escaped to Northumbria, where the Danes owned him as the king. He then went beyond sea to collect troops, and in 904 he landed in East-Anglia, where the people at once submitted to him. In breach of peace they joined him (905) in an invasion of Mercia, and penetrated to Wiltshire. King Edward assembled an army and pursued them; he ravaged all their country from one end to the other, and then retired, charging all his men to follow; but the Kentish men took no heed, and stayed till the Danes came and surrounded them. The battle was fierce, and most of the leaders on both sides fell, among the rest the pretender Ethelwald; so that the disobedience and loss of the Kentish men was ultimately of advantage to king Edward, who in the following year concluded a peace with the Danes of Northumbria and East-Anglia. The turbulent Danes however could not remain at rest, and they began again (911) to ravage Mercia. The king assembled a large fleet to attack their coast; the Danes thinking all his troops were aboard of these ships, advanced boldly into Mercia, wasting and plundering; but the royal army came up with them as they were retiring, and routed them with great slaughter.

During the remainder of his reign king Edward gradually extended his power and supremacy over the whole island. The people of Northumbria and East-Anglia submitted to him; the princes of Cornwall, Wales, Cumbria,

and Strath-clyde, and the king of the Scots, became his liegemen. In all his projects he was assisted by the Lady of Mercia, as his sister Ethelfleda was named, who governed Mercia after the death of her husband (912). This able princess headed her own troops, and gained victories over both Danes and Britons. She and the king turned their thoughts to the possession of strong fortified towns as the best means of securing the realm. The Lady fortified Bridgenorth, Tamworth, Stafford, Warwick, Leicester, Derby, etc.; the king raised works round Hertford, Witham, Buckingham, Bedford, Malden, Towcester, Colchester, Stamford, Manchester, Nottingham, and other towns. On the death of the Lady (920) Edward took the government of Mercia into his own hands. After a prosperous reign of twenty-four years, king Edward died in peace (925).

CHAPTER IV.

ANGLO-SAXON SOVEREIGNS OF ALL BRITAIN*.

ATHELSTAN.—Battle of Brunnanburgh.—EDMUND.—EDRED.—EDWY (the Fair).—Saint Dunstan.—Elgiva.—EDGAR (the Pacific).—Elfrida.—EDWARD II. (the Martyr).—Dunstan's Miracles.—ETHELRED (the Unready).—Massacre of the Danes;—their Conquests.—EDMUND II. (Ironside).

ATHELSTAN. 925—941.

By the will of his father and the choice of the Witan, Athelstan, the late king's eldest son, mounted the throne. He was crowned at Kingston; but a part of the West-Saxons alleging that he was illegitimate refused to recognise him, and a conspiracy to seize and blind him was formed by a nobleman named Alfred. The plot was discovered, but as Alfred denied his guilt, he was allowed, according to Anglo-Saxon usage, to clear himself by oath before a bishop. It was agreed that he should go to Rome and swear in presence of the pope; he accordingly repaired thither, and before the Holy Father swore that he was innocent. Instantly, it is said, he fell senseless to the ground, and he died within three days.

The first wars in which this able prince was engaged were against the Britons of Cambria and Damnonia, who strove to regain their independence (927). But their efforts were unavailing; the Cambrian princes had to come to Hereford and do homage, and agree to pay yearly twenty pounds weight of gold and two hundred of silver into the *hoard* or treasury of the 'king of London'; they were to send him every year five thousand beeves, and their best hawks and hounds, and the country between the Severn and the Wye was to become a part of Mercia. The Damnonians, who hitherto had dwelt to the Exe, were

* Authorities: Saxon Chronicle, Malmsbury, &c., as before.

now driven beyond the Tamar, and completely reduced beneath the sceptre of Athelstan.

The king, in the hopes of maintaining peace, had given one of his sisters in marriage to Sihtric, the ruler of the Danes beyond the Humber; but Sihtric dying soon after, the northern chieftains urged his sons Guthfrith (Godfrey), and Anlaf (Olave) to cast off allegiance to Athelstan; "for in the old time," said they, "we were free, and served not the southern king." War was resolved on. Constantine, king of the Scots, took share in it; but the power of the English king was not to be withstood,—the Danish princes were forced to fly beyond sea, the Scottish king to do homage for his dominions, and give his son as a hostage*.

Guthfrith and Anlaf embraced the life of pirates; the former died early; but the latter, more fortunate, made himself master of Dublin, in Ireland, and became the chief of a powerful piratic force. The king of the Scots, ill brooking subjection, made a treaty with Anlaf; the Britons also of Strath-clyde, Cumbria, and Cambria, readily joined in the league; and when Anlaf entered the Humber (937) with a fleet of six hundred and twenty sail, the whole confederacy took arms. King Athelstan assembled an army without delay, and the hostile forces met at a place named Brunnanburgh. It is said that Anlaf before the battle disguised himself as a minstrel, and entered the English camp. The soldiers quickly flocked about him: the news of the arrival of a strange minstrel was brought to the king, at whose order Anlaf was led to the royal tent, where he played and sang as the king and his nobles sat at a banquet; he was then dismissed with a suitable reward. He retired, having noted everything in the camp;

* The king of Scots had, as we have seen, done homage to Edward in 921. There are, we apprehend, few points in history more certain than the vassalage of the Scottish crown from that date till the end of the fourteenth century. See Palgrave's *Rise and Progress of the English Constitution*, vol. i. ch. 20.

but his pride would not let him retain the money which prudence had induced him to accept, and he buried it in the ground when he thought himself unobserved. A soldier, however, saw him, and on a close inspection recognised him, and then went and informed the king. Athelstan demanded why he had not given information when he might be seized. The soldier made answer, that he had once served and sworn fealty to Anlaf, and if he had betrayed *him*, the king might justly suspect him of equal treachery to himself. Athelstan praised him, and then, suspecting Anlaf's design, removed his tent to another part of the camp, and the vacant ground was occupied by the bishop of Sherborn, who arrived that evening with his retainers. In the dead of the night Anlaf and his troops burst into the English camp, and making direct for the royal tent, as they thought, slaughtered the bishop and his companions. The tumult spread; at sun-rise a regular battle commenced, and having lasted all through the day, terminated in the utter discomfiture of the invaders. Five Danish kings and seven earls (*Iarls*) were slain, the king of Scots lost his son, and warriors without number fell. "Never," says the poet who sung the battle, "since the Saxons and Angles, those artists of war, arrived, was such slaughter known in England."

After this great victory the realm of Athelstan was at ease and tranquil. The king of the English, or of all Britain as he styled himself, was highly respected by the princes of the continent; the kings of Norway and Armoric sent their sons to be reared at his court; the son of the German emperor, Charles the Simple king of France, the duke of Aquitaine, and Hugh the Great count of Paris espoused his four sisters; and after the dethronement of Charles the Simple, his widow and her son Louis took refuge in England, whence the latter was named when restored D'outremer (*From beyond sea*).

EDMUND. 941—947.

Athelstan was succeeded (941) by his brother Edmund, then only eighteen years of age. The Northumbrians immediately recalled Anlaf from Ireland to be their king; and Wulstan, archbishop of York, warmly espoused his cause. Mercia was forthwith invaded, and Tamworth taken and plundered; a battle was fought at Leicester, after which, by the mediation of the prelates of York and Canterbury, a peace was concluded, by which Edmund was to rule south, Anlaf north of Watling Street*, and the survivor to possess the whole. Anlaf however died the next year, and Edmund then (945) reduced all Northumbria. He next turned his arms against the Britons of Cumbria; he defeated and expelled Donald, their prince, and blinded his sons, and then gave the country to Malcolm, king of Scots, in vassalage. Edmund the Magnificent, as he is named, did not long enjoy his power. As the next year (946) he was sitting at a banquet with his nobles, on St. Augustine's festival, he saw at the table one Leof, who had been outlawed. Enraged at his audacity the king sprang up, caught him by his long hair, and dragged him to the ground; but in the struggle Leof drew a dagger, and gave the monarch a mortal wound.

EDRED. 947—955.

As Edmund's children were young, he was succeeded by his brother Edred, a prince of delicate frame, but of vigorous mind; his dominion was acknowledged by all the kingdoms of the island. Hardly however had the Northumbrians taken the oaths, when they rose in rebellion, and made a Norwegian pirate, named Eric, their king. Edred speedily invaded and laid waste their country; and as he menaced to return and do still worse, they

* So the Roman military road from Dover to Chester (a part of which still remains) was named by the Saxons.



deposed and murdered their new ruler, and submitted to the king. As Wulstan was the chief cause of disturbance, Edred, after confining him some time at Jedburgh, made him bishop of Dorchester, in Oxfordshire, where he could do no mischief. Northumbria was now made an *earldom*, and not a *kingdom*, and the earl was appointed by the king.

EDWY. (THE FAIR.) 955—959.

On the death of Edred (955), his nephew Edwy, the son of the late king Edmund, was chosen king, and Mercia became the apanage of Edwy's younger brother Edgar.

The most remarkable man of these times was Dunstan, whom the church of Rome has canonised for his exertions in her cause. Dunstan was of noble birth, and even akin to the royal family, and his wealth was considerable; he received his early education at the monastery of Glastonbury; intense study brought on him while there a severe attack of fever, and there is some reason to suppose that it may have caused a partial derangement of intellect, for all through his life he was, according to his own account, (and we should not be too forward to accuse him of falsehood,) tormented by visions of evil spirits. His bodily frame was delicate, but his mind was most active; he was master of all the learning and arts of the age; he wrought the various metals with great skill; he excelled chiefly in music, and with the tones of his harp he sought to soothe his perturbed spirit, and banish the thoughts that agitated him. By his uncle Athelm, archbishop of Canterbury, he was early introduced at the court of king Athelstan, where he won favour by his knowledge and accomplishments. But envy and jealousy soon showed themselves among the courtiers; the proud spirit of Dunstan was roused, and he quitted the court: his enemies lay in ambush for him; they seized and bound him, trampled him under foot, and

flung him into a marsh, where he lay till he was found and relieved by some passers-by.

He soon after consulted his uncle on his future course of life; the prelate urged him to become a monk, but Dunstan, who loved a beautiful maiden, withstood all his arguments. Athelm then prayed that some evil might befall him to cause him to act right; and Dunstan, viewing a fever, brought on probably by mental uneasiness, as a judgement sent from heaven, took the monastic vows at Glastonbury. Not content with the ordinary austerities of the convent, he built himself a cell too short to allow him to lie at his length, and here he wrought at his forge when not engaged in prayer: his sleep was brief; his food barely sufficed to sustain nature. Here too the fiend assailed him, and it is said that late one evening he came in a human form, and thrusting his head in at the little window of the cell, began to tempt the recluse with wanton language. Dunstan, who knew who he was, waited patiently till he had made his tongs red hot, with which he then seized the tempter by the nose, and the yells of the tortured demon were heard over the surrounding country. The fame of the sanctity, the talents, and the wisdom of Dunstan spread over the whole realm; king Edmund on his accession gave him the abbacy of Glastonbury, invited him to court and made him his chief minister, and his influence in this and the following reign was without limits.

The zeal of Dunstan was directed to two points: the enforcement of celibacy on the clergy, and the introduction of the monastic rule of St. Benedict into England. Hitherto the English clergy in general had followed the dictates of nature and the plain sense of Scripture, and entered, like other men, into the married state; but the Oriental reverence of asceticism and celibacy had gradually been gaining ground in the Western church, and the popes had possibly begun to discern the advantages they might de-

rive from cutting the clergy off from all social ties, and heedless or ignorant of consequences, eagerly sought to enforce an institution which experience has shown to be the most detrimental to morality that has ever been devised. A Roman monk named Benedict had also drawn up a series of rules for the regulation of the convent of Monte Cassino, over which he presided; the superiority of these rules caused them to be adopted all over the continent, and the monks throughout Europe thus formed one corporation. The rule had been adopted at Glastonbury, but the English and British monasteries in general continued to govern themselves by their ancient institutes. Dunstan, a man of resolute character, and in whose heart all social feelings were now extinct, resolved to enforce the rule which he approved, and the celibacy which he had learned to regard as sanctifying; he had naturally to encounter much opposition, but like most reformers of his character he was little scrupulous as to means, regarding them as justified by the end, and he exerted all the influence and power he possessed to carry his favourite measures.

On the accession of Edwy the influence of Dunstan in the state began to wane; for the king, a youth of but seventeen years of age and addicted to pleasure, set himself against the new regulations in the church. Edwy had, in opposition to his councillors and prelates, espoused a beautiful maiden of the royal blood, but related to him within the prohibited degrees*. On the day of his coronation, when his nobles were carousing after the Saxon fashion in the royal halls, the king secretly withdrew, and leaving them to their revels retired to enjoy the society of his wife

* We give this view of the case on the authority of the honest Saxon Chronicle. Its words are: "In this year (958) archbishop Odo divorced king Edwy and Elfgiva, because they were too sib" (*i. e.* near akin). There must, therefore, have been a marriage. The atrocious statements and imputations of Dunstan's biographers are, in our opinion, utterly unworthy of credit. He knows little of writers of this class who believes that they will stop at any falsehood in the cause of their hero.


and her mother. At the desire of the guests, Dunstan and one of the prelates went in search of him, and entering the apartment, Dunstan abused Elgiva (so the queen was named) and her mother in the most opprobrious manner, even menacing the latter with the gallows. He seized the king, dragged him away to the hall where the nobles were reveling, and forced him to resume his seat.

Edwy had too much spirit not to resent this insult, and Elgiva naturally urged him to vengeance. Under the pretext of Dunstan's having made away with public money in the late reign he banished him the kingdom. Dunstan retired to Ghent, but he had left a strong party behind him; at the instance of Odo, archbishop of Canterbury, the people rose in rebellion in Mercia and the North, and made prince Edgar their king; and in Wessex Odo forced the king to give up Elgiva, who by the prelate's orders was seized by a band of soldiers; her face was scarred with a red-hot iron, and she was banished to Ireland*. But when her wounds were healed she returned in search of her husband; she was, however, intercepted by a party of Odo's soldiers, by whom she was seized and hamstrung, and she died in great torture at Gloucester. The unhappy Edwy did not long survive, and Edgar, now but thirteen years of age, became king of all England.

EDGAR (THE PEACEFUL). 959—975.

There is, perhaps, no just reason for supposing that Dunstan, or possibly even Odo, had given orders for the atrocities which their partisans had committed, but the abbot

* How gently Lingard tells all this! "Archbishop Odo undertook to remove the scandal by enforcing the punishment which the laws awarded against women living in a state of concubinage. Accompanied by his retainers he rode to the place, arrested Ethelgiva, probably in the absence of her lover, conducted her to the sea-side, and put her on board a ship, in which she was conveyed to Ireland. At his return to court he waited on Edwy, and in respectful and affectionate language endeavoured to justify his own conduct and to soothe the exasperated mind of the young prince."



of Glastonbury certainly reaped the advantage of them. He returned in triumph when Edgar was acknowledged in Mercia and Northumbria, and became his chief adviser; he was made bishop of London and Worcester, and Edgar forced the successor of Odo to resign, that Dunstan might have the primacy, with which he held the sees of London and Rochester. The married clergy were persecuted without mercy, and not less than forty-eight Benedictine monasteries were founded in England. The king joined heartily in this persecution, and the monkish writers have in return made him almost a saint. Their only charge against him is his fondness for introducing Flemings, Germans, and Danes into the kingdom, who corrupted, as they say, the simple virtuous habits of the people.

Yet Edgar's character was in some respects far from perfect. He broke into a convent and carried off a nun, at least a lady who had assumed the veil*, named Wulfreda, and made her his mistress; for this Dunstan enjoined him by way of penance to fast twice a week, and to lay aside his crown for a term of seven years. But on another occasion the monarch's guilt was morally, though not perhaps in Dunstan's eyes, of a deeper die. Having heard much of the beauty of Elfrida, daughter of Ordgar, earl of Devon, he directed one of his favourites, named Athelwold, to visit the earl under some pretence, and see if fame spake true of his daughter's charms. At the sight of Elfrida, Athelwold conceived the most violent affection, and he resolved to sacrifice his duty to his love. He returned to the king, and told him that fame had exaggerated, as usual, and that Elfrida was but an ordinary maiden. Edgar then ceased to think of her; and some time after Athelwold said to him,

* Malmsbury asserts that she was not professed (*sanctimonialis*). Dunstan's biographers expressly say that she was; yet Dr. Lingard cites them as witnesses for his statement, that she "was a young lady educated in the convent, who to elude his pursuit had covered herself with the veil of one of the sisters." His saying that Malmsbury *adds* "*certum est non tunc sanctimoniam fuisse,*" would seem to intimate that the others had said nothing on this subject.

that he had been thinking, that homely as Elfrida was, her birth and fortune would make her an eligible match for himself, and he craved permission to seek her hand. The king gave a ready assent, and even strongly recommended him to her parents, and the fair Elfrida became the wife of Athelwold. But a courtier has many enemies, and the truth soon reached the ears of the king; he dissembled his resentment, and only told Athelwold that he was resolved to pay him a visit, and be introduced to his new-married wife. Athelwold saw his danger, and having obtained permission to precede him by a few hours, hastened to Elfrida, and revealing to her the whole truth, implored her to use every artifice to conceal her beauty. Elfrida, an aspiring ambitious woman, though secretly incensed, promised compliance, and Athelwold's fears were somewhat allayed; but what was his horror when he saw her come before the king in the full blaze of her charms, and practise all her arts on the royal heart! Edgar still dissembled, but a few days after he slew Athelwold at a hunting party with his own hand, and then made Elfrida his queen* (965).

It is also related that king Edgar being one time entertained by a nobleman at Andover, was so smitten by the charms of the fair daughter of his host that he required her mother to make her the inmate of his chamber for the night. The lady feigned compliance, and it was arranged that her daughter should repair to the royal bed in the dark. In her stead, however, was sent one of the female slaves; the king having in the morning discovered the deception, forgave the lady, and he retained the slave as his mistress†.

Edgar, named by his historians the 'Peaceful,' was doubtless a prince of no mean capacity. His sway was supreme over the whole island; the sound of war was un-

* It is but fair to add, that the authority on which Malmsbury relates this tale is apparently a Saxon ballad.

† For this tale also there seems to have been only ballad-authority.

heard during his reign, justice was duly administered, and the realm prospered: the kings of Scotland and Man, and all the princes of the Britons, were his liegemen. In the sixteenth year of his reign (973), having celebrated his coronation at Bath*, he assembled a numerous fleet, and proceeded to Chester, whither his vassal princes were summoned to meet him and perform homage. The morning following the day of that ceremony Edgar and his royal vassals entered a barge on the Dee; each prince grasped an oar, the king himself took the helm, and they thus proceeded down the river to St. John's monastery, and having there heard mass, returned in the same manner to the royal abode.

The reign of this prince is remarkable for the extirpation of wolves in England. Driven from the plain country these animals harboured in the mountains of Wales, whence they descended to commit their ravages. Edgar changed the annual tribute imposed by Athelstan on the Welsh princes to that of three hundred wolves' heads, and so active a chase was kept up against the wolves that the race was soon extinct.

EDWARD II. (THE MARTYR.) 975-978.

On the death of Edgar (975) there was a contest between two parties in the state, the one supporting the claim to the throne of Edward, son of the late king by his first wife Elfleda, the other seeking to place the crown on the head of Ethelred, the son of Elfrida. Edward's cause, which was founded in justice and supported by Dunstan, succeeded, and he was crowned; but his reign was brief. As he was hunting one day in Dorsetshire (978), and came near Corfe Castle, where Elfrida and her son resided, he went unattended to pay them a visit. Elfrida received him

* This was probably the resumption of his crown on the expiration of his penance.

with great apparent kindness, but while he was drinking a cup of mead on horseback, one of her servants, as he had been directed, stabbed him in the back: the king gave spurs to his horse, but he soon fell exhausted by loss of blood, and was dragged along by his horse till he expired. The appellation of 'Martyr' was bestowed on this innocent and ill-fated prince, and miracles were believed to be wrought at his tomb.

It was during the reign of this prince that two events occurred, which have led many modern writers to entertain serious and not ill-founded doubts of the sanctity of Dunstan's character.

At a synod held at Winchester (977), at which the young king and the prelates and nobles of the realm were present, the matters in dispute between the clergy and the monks were discussed. When the arguments had been gone through a profound silence reigned, all anxiously expecting the reply of Dunstan, who sat with his head hanging down as immersed in thought. Suddenly a voice was heard from a crucifix in the room, saying, "Let it not be! let it not be! Ye have judged well; to change were not well!" Even at the time some contrivance was suspected, and certainly the transaction strongly resembles a feat of ventriloquism, a power which there is some reason to believe the Saint possessed.

Another synod was held the following year (978), at Calne, at which the king was not present, on account, it was alleged, of his tender age. The two parties occupied different sides of the room. When his opponents had ended their arguments, Dunstan declared that he would commit the cause of the church to Christ. Instantly the floor gave way under the opposite party, and they were killed or maimed by the falling timbers, while the part where Dunstan and his friends were sitting remained firm and unmoved*. This may doubtless have been accidental, but

* So the matter is related by Dunstan's biographers, Eadmer and Osbern. The Saxon Chronicle, Malmesbury, Huntingdon, and others say that Dunstan

one may without breach of charity suspect, as Fuller says, "that Dunstan, who had so much of a smith, had here something of a carpenter in him, and some device used by him about pinning and propping up the room." Unfortunately the character neither of Dunstan nor of his church offers any security that such an atrocious measure would not be resorted to in support of the cause.

ETHELRED (THE UNREADY). 978—1016.

Ethelred mounted without opposition the throne which his mother's crime had procured him (978). Though *he* was innocent, Dunstan at his coronation pronounced, it is said, a malediction on his reign for the guilt of Elfrida and her accomplices; and never was prophecy of ill more fully accomplished, though Dunstan lived but to see the beginning of the evil. The Danes, who had let the kingdom have rest since the days of Athelstan, now renewed their ravages. Sweyn, son of the king of Denmark, being banished by his father, assembled a pirate-fleet, and appeared off the coast of England (982). Chester and London were taken and plundered, and the whole south coast ravaged. The Danes continuing their inroads, the Witan, by the advice of the archbishop Siric, agreed (991) to give them ten thousand pounds of silver* to purchase exemption from their ravages, for which purpose a tax under the name of *Dane-geld* (*Dane-money*) was imposed. But this cowardly expedient had the fate it merited. It served but to excite the cupidity of the Danes, and the next year (992) they appeared in still greater force on the east coast. The English were now roused to energy; a

alone escaped injury by catching hold of a beam. The account in the text seems to us the true one. Lingard, with his usual art, affects to regard this and the speaking crucifix as fictions undeserving of notice. The biographers are now, with him, silly credulous men, who compiled from materials of the worst description; but when the object is to charge the unhappy Edwy with the most incredible depravity, their evidence becomes unimpeachable.

* See Appendix (E).

large fleet was assembled at London, and it was intended to close the pirates in harbour and then assail them; but the treachery of one of the English leaders frustrated the plan. Alfric, earl of Mercia, having engaged in a conspiracy against Ethelred, had been banished the realm (985); yet such was his influence and power, that he was restored to his lands and office. As a means of securing himself he had entered into a secret league with the Danes; he now sent them intelligence of the plan for their destruction, and he stole away from the army the night before the engagement which took place. The king had the barbarity to put out the eyes of Elfgar, the traitor's son, to punish the misdeeds of the father. Yet ere long Alfric was again ruler of Mercia!

In 993 Sweyn, now king of Denmark, and Olave king of Norway, entered the Humber with a large fleet, and laid all the adjacent country waste. The next year they came and laid siege to London, and failing to take it, spread their ravages over the southern counties. The king and his council agreed to give them sixteen thousand pounds if they ceased, and to supply them with provisions. They therefore fixed themselves at Southampton, and food came to them from all parts of Wessex. Olave soon after visited the king at Andover, and was there baptized; he made a solemn promise, and kept it, never again to molest the realm of England, and on his return to Norway he imposed his own faith on all his subjects.

Year after year the Northmen made descents on various parts of the coast, burned the towns and villages, and laid waste the country. The troops collected to oppose them always lost courage and fled, their leaders not seldom setting them the example. In 1002 peace was purchased for twenty-four thousand pounds, and food as before. Meantime the king and his Witan resolved to have recourse to a most atrocious expedient for their future security. It had been the practice of the English kings from the time

of Athelstan to have great numbers of Danes in their pay as guards or household troops (*Hus-carles*), and these, it is said, they quartered on their subjects, one on each house. The *Hus-carles*, acting like soldiers in general, paid great attention to their dress and appearance, and thus became more acceptable to the females of the families than the Englishmen liked; they also, of course, behaved occasionally with great insolence. At the same time they acted very remissly against their foreign kinsmen, and were strongly suspected of having intelligence with them. It was therefore resolved to massacre the *Hus-carles* and their families throughout England. Secret orders to this effect were sent to all parts, and on St. Brice's day (Nov. 13th, 1002,) the Danes were everywhere fallen on and slain. The ties of affinity (for many of them had married and settled in the country) were disregarded; age, sex, or rank could claim no exemption; even Gunhilda, sister to Sweyn of Denmark, though a Christian, was, after beholding the death of her husband and son, beheaded by the command of the king's favourite, Edric Streone, the chief instigator, it is thought, of the massacre. With her last breath she declared that her death would bring the greatest evils on England.

The words of Gunhilda proved prophetic. Sweyn, burning for revenge and glad of a pretext for war, soon made his appearance on the south coast, and during four years he spread devastation through all parts of Wessex, and round to East-Anglia. In 1006 the king and his Witan agreed to give thirty thousand pounds and provisions as before for peace, and the realm thus had rest for two years. In this space of time measures were adopted for raising a large land- and sea-force; the owners of nine hides of land were obliged to furnish a man with helm and breastplate, and those of three hundred and ten a ship*.

* This was the origin of ship-money, so fatal to the Stuarts.

The greatest fleet that had ever been seen in England was assembled (1009) at Sandwich, but it was as fruitless as the preceding armaments; and Brihtric, brother of Edric, having traduced Wulfnoth, the 'Child of Sussex' as he is called, to the king, the latter went off with his division of twenty ships, and ravaged all the south coast. Brihtric sailed with eighty ships in pursuit of him, but his vessels were assailed by a storm and most of them driven ashore, where they were burnt by Wulfnoth. The king and all his nobles on hearing of this disaster quitted the fleet, which went back to London; and thus, after all the great expense of preparation, nothing was effected. Immediately afterwards came a formidable Danish army, called from its leader 'Thurkill's Host,' to Sandwich, and during this and the following year it spread its ravages almost unopposed through Kent, East-Anglia, Mercia, and Wessex. London repelled the invaders from its walls; but they took most of the other towns which they attacked, and Canterbury was given to them by the treachery of an abbot named Elfmar. They led the venerable archbishop Elfeah a captive to their fleet, in the hopes of obtaining a large ransom for him. But he stood firm against them; he declared he had no goods of his own, and he would not waste those of the church, which belonged to the poor and needy, nor "provide Christian flesh for Pagan teeth by robbing his countrymen for *them*." They dragged him before a kind of council of their chiefs, who were at a rude tumultuous banquet; their cry was "Gold, bishop, gold!" and when he still persisted in refusing, they pelted him with cow-horns and bones. At length one of them smote him with an axe on the head and killed him. Meantime Edric and the Witan, who were assembled at London, had agreed to purchase the departure of the 'Host' for forty-eight thousand pounds, and the king made Thurkill earl of East-Anglia, and took him and a great part of his men into his pay.

But all availed not to save England from the Danish yoke. Next year (1013) king Sweyn appeared with a large and splendidly equipped fleet at Sandwich; he sailed thence and entered the Humber. All Northumbria and Lindesey, and all the Danes north of Watling Street joyfully submitted to him, and gave hostages. Leaving his fleet and his hostages with his son Canute (Knut), and having made the country furnish horses for his army, he advanced southwards, spreading devastation on his way. London, where the king abode at this time, having repelled his attacks, he went to Bath, where he received the submissions of the western thanes. Meantime Ethelred abandoned London, and took shelter in the isle of Wight, where having bitterly complained of the treachery and disaffection of his nobles and generals, he sent the lady Emma, his wife, and his two sons, for safety to the court of her brother, the duke of Normandy, whither he was soon obliged to repair himself also. The royal exiles were most kindly received at the Norman court, and Sweyn became the unopposed ruler of all England.

The duke of Normandy, to whom the king of England was allied by marriage, was the third in descent from Hrolf or Rollo, one of the most formidable of the piratic Northmen in the days of Alfred. Harassed by the continual devastations committed on his dominions by these freebooters, the French king Charles the Simple agreed to surrender the province of Neustria to Rollo on the same terms as Alfred had given up East-Anglia to Guthrum. Rollo thus became the most powerful vassal of the crown of France; he treated his new subjects with justice and kindness, embraced their religion, and sought to mitigate the ferocity of his freebooting comrades; by degrees the two parties firmly coalesced, the French language became that of both court and people, the manners and religion of the French prevailed; the province was named Normandy from the Northmen.

Sweyn did not long enjoy his new dominion ; he died early in the following year (1014). The Danish host chose his son Canute king ; but the English nobles and clergy met and resolved to recall king Ethelred, provided he would pledge himself to govern them better than he had done hitherto. The king sent over his son Edmund, named Ironside from his bodily vigour, and a solemn compact was entered into between king and people, he engaging "to be their faithful lord, to better each of the things that they disliked, and to forgive each of the things that had been done or said against him ; provided they all unanimously, without treachery, turned to him." A decree was then passed declaring every Danish king an outlaw in England. Ethelred returned and marched an army into Lindesey, where Canute was making preparations for war, and laid the country waste. Canute having retired to his ships sailed round to Sandwich, where he set the hostages given to his father on shore, after cutting off their hands, ears, and noses.

The next year (1015), a great council was held at Oxford. Among those who repaired to it were Sigferth and Morcar, the chief thanes of the Danish Burghs* ; but the treacherous Edric having enticed them into his bower (*bure*), or private apartment, had them there slain, probably with the knowledge of the king, who immediately seized their possessions. The widow of Sigferth was confined at Malmsbury, whence Edmund the Atheling† carried her off by force and made her his wife, and in her right took possession by the strong hand of all the lands of Sigferth and Morcar. As Canute was now ravaging the coast of Wessex, an army under Edmund and Edric advanced to oppose him ; but no action took place, in consequence of an attempt of Edric to betray the prince. Foiled in his attempt, the

* These were Lincoln, Nottingham, Leicester, Derby, and Stamford.

† Atheling (from *ethel*, noble) is equivalent to crown prince or heir-apparent.

traitor went off with a part of his forces* and openly joined the enemy. All Wessex now submitted to Canute, and he and Edric led their forces in the mid-winter into Mercia, burning and plundering as usual. Edmund vainly tried to collect a sufficient army to oppose them; the king fearing treachery would not take the field, and Canute having ravaged all the east of Mercia, entered and subdued Northumbria, whose earl had joined the Atheling.


While such was the state of affairs, the troubled life and reign of king Ethelred came to a close. He died on St. George's day (1016) at London.

EDMUND II. (IRONSIDE). 1016.

On the death of king Ethelred all the Witan who were present joined with the citizens in electing Edmund the Atheling king; but the Witan of Wessex meantime met at Southampton and chose Canute, and the sword was now to decide between the rival monarchs. Canute sailed up the Thames and laid siege to London, which was bravely defended by the citizens; and in the mean time Edmund who had escaped from it by night raised the men of Wessex. Canute advanced against him, and the armies encountered at a place named Searston. Night ended an obstinate conflict; in the morning it was renewed. Edmund with his battle-axe cleft the shield of his rival and wounded his horse; the Danes crowded to the relief of their king, and while Edmund was in the midst of them, the traitor Edric, who fought that day on the side of Canute, cut off the head of a thane, and holding it up, cried, "The head of Edmund!" The English were beginning to give way, but Edmund hurled his spear at the traitor, and ascending an eminence took off his helmet that he might be recognised. The battle was thus restored, but night again terminated it.

* "With forty ships," is the language of the chronicler. These are said to be Danish troops, whom it was the habit to reckon by ships'-crews. See Lingard.

Canute fell back toward London, followed by Edmund. A battle was fought at Brentford and another at Oxford. In a third battle at Asington in Essex, the traitor Edric, who was now on the side of Edmund, just as the action had commenced, cried out, "Flee, English! flee, English! dead is Edmund!" and then set the example of flight. "Thus had Canute the victory," says the chronicle, "though all England fought against him, and all the nobility of England was there undone." Canute followed Edmund into Gloucestershire, where that indefatigable prince had assembled another army. When the forces stood in array Edmund proposed to decide their claims by single combat; but Canute saying that he, a man of small stature, would have little chance against the tall athletic Edmund, proposed, on the contrary, for them to divide the realm as their fathers had done. A meeting was held in the isle of Olney for the purpose, and Edric and the Witan there arranged that Edmund should retain Wessex, Essex, East-Anglia, and London, with a superiority over the rest of the kingdom which was assigned to the Dane. But before the end of the year Edmund was no more, and Edric is accused of having been the author of his death.



CHAPTER V.

DANISH KINGS, AND SAXON LINE RESTORED*.

CANUTE.—HAROLD I. (Harefoot).—HARDACNUTE.—EDWARD III. (the Confessor).—Godwin.—Harold.—Harold in Normandy.—HAROLD II.—Defeat of the King of Norway.—Landing of the Duke of Normandy.—Battle of Hastings.

CANUTE. 1016—1035.

WHEN the death of Edmund was known, the Witan assembled at London and decided that Canute should be king of all England, and they outlawed the family of Ethelred. Canute soon after put to death Edwy, the brother of Edmund; and he sent that monarch's two infant children to his half-brother, the king of Sweden, requesting him, it is said, to free him from uneasiness by their death. The Swede shrank from staining his hands with the blood of babes, and sent them to the king of Hungary, who brought them up carefully. One of them died; the other, named Edward, was married to his benefactor's sister-in-law, and had issue, of which we shall hear anon. Canute might thus have been so far secure; but the lady Emma had her two sons with her in Normandy, and duke Robert, their cousin, was inclined to assert their rights. To obviate this danger Canute sought and obtained the hand of Emma in marriage, engaging to leave the crown of England to her issue by him.

Canute divided his realm into four separate governments. Wessex he retained in his own hands; Mercia was ruled by Edric; East-Anglia by Thurkill the Dane, and Northumberland by the king's kinsman Eric. But in the very

* Authorities:—same as before, with the *Encomium Emmæ*, *Ingulf*, *Ordericus*, *Pictaviensis*, and *Gemmatensis*.

* first year of the new monarch's reign Edric met the reward of his treachery in the following manner. Not content with Mercia, he sought more, alleging as his merits his treasons to Edmund. Canute replied, that he who had been a traitor to an old master would hardly be faithful to a new one. Eric then, probably in concert with the king, struck Edric dead with a battle-axe; his body was flung into the Thames; his head was stuck on the highest gate of London. Several of the English nobles were put to death, and their possessions given to the Danes; and these men, as was to be expected, treated the English with such insolence as drew on them their universal hatred.

Canute was the most powerful monarch of the age. He was king of England, Denmark, and Norway, and superior lord of Sweden and Scotland. England was his chief abode, but he frequently visited his northern dominions, where the hostility of the Sclavonian Vends, who held the south coast of the Baltic, and the independent spirit of the Swedes, gave occasional employment to his arms. In one of these expeditions, the native English troops, commanded by Godwin, son of Wulfnoth, 'the Child of Sussex', being stationed near the enemy's camp, their leader seeing a favourable opportunity fell on it in the night and completely routed the foes. Canute to reward Godwin gave him his daughter in marriage, and highly advanced him in wealth and honour. All through the reign of this king England was at peace; toward its close (1033), Malcolm king of Scots, and his son Duncan prince of Cumbria, refused homage, alleging that Canute not being the rightful king, was not entitled to claim it; but the appearance of that monarch with a large army soon reduced them to obedience, and they acknowledged themselves his vassals.

Advancing age mitigated the original harshness of Canute's character; his rule became just and equitable, and he gradually gained the affections of his English subjects; religion also engaged much of his thoughts and time, and

he showed his piety in the manner of that age by building churches and endowing monasteries. He even (1031) made a pilgrimage to Rome, and he engaged the princes through whose dominions he passed to cease from exacting tolls from the English pilgrims.

It is said that one day, while he was residing at Southampton, his courtiers were extolling his might and power. Canute ordered his chair to be set on the strand, where the tide was now advancing, and as lord of the ocean commanded it not to approach ; but heedless of his mandate the waves pursued their destined course, and soon flowed around the royal seat. Then turning to his flatterers, the king bade them confess the weakness and impotence of all human power compared with that of Him who had said to the ocean, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no further." After this he deposited the crown in the cathedral of Winchester, and never again resumed it. Canute died at Shaftesbury (1035) after a reign of eighteen years, regretted by his subjects, and confessedly inferior in fame and ability to no monarch of the time.

HAROLD I. (HAREFOOT.) 1035—1040.

Canute left three sons, Sweyn, Harold, and Hardacnute. To the last, who was the issue of the lady Emma, and was alone legitimate, England was due by the marriage contract ; but Canute had by will appointed him ruler of Denmark (where he now was) and of the Danes in England, while to Sweyn he left Norway, and to Harold England. This last, who was on the spot and had secured the royal hoard or treasure, was supported by Leofric earl of Mercia, the thanes north of the Thames, and the citizens of London ; while Godwin now earl of Wessex, and the English in general were in favour of Hardacnute. A Witenagemot was held at Oxford, in which it was agreed that Hardacnute should be king of Wessex. As he still remained in Denmark, his mother Emma, aided by Godwin, governed

it as regent. Her two sons by Ethelred, who were in Normandy, meantime fitted out a fleet and sailed over to England to maintain their right; but on coming to Southampton they found the people prepared to oppose them, and they retired. Soon after (1037) a letter was written in the name of their mother, inviting one or both of them to come over and assert their claim to the crown; and Alfred, the more spirited of the two, set sail from Flanders with about 600 followers. Godwin received him with much seeming kindness, and they set out for Winchester; but at Guildford they were all seized in the night by armed men, and next morning, being drawn up in a line with their hands bound behind them, one out of every ten was selected and set at liberty, a few were reserved for slaves, and the rest were inhumanly butchered. The unhappy prince was sent to Ely, where he was blinded, and he soon after died. Godwin was accused of this crime, Harold having it is said, gained him by a promise to marry his daughter*. Emma not thinking herself any longer safe retired to Bruges in Flanders, where some time after she was joined by her son Hardacnute, and Harold dying (1040) after a reign of about four years, he was unanimously invited to occupy the throne.

HARDACNUTE. 1040—1042.

One of the first acts of the new monarch was to avenge on the senseless remains of Harold his own exclusion and the murder of his brother Alfred; he caused them to be dug up and flung into the Thames. This king imposed such heavy Danegeld on the people, that commotions prevailed in various parts, particularly at Worcester, which town was stormed and plundered by his command. The reign of Hardacnute also was brief; at the wedding banquet of his banner-bearer, a Dane named Towed the

* Dr. Lingard has, in our opinion, made a very good defence for Godwin.



Proud*, at Lambeth, which he honoured with his presence, and where the drinking, as usual, was deep, he fell speechless to the ground, and expired a few days after (1042).

EDWARD III. (THE CONFESSOR.) 1042—1066.

Edward, the remaining son of Ethelred, was at this time in England, whither he had been invited by his brother the late king, and being of a timid character was preparing to fly to Normandy, when Godwin proposed to secure him the crown on condition of his espousing his daughter Editha the Fair. Edward assented; the influence of Godwin smoothed all difficulties in a great council held at London, and at Easter (1043) Edward was crowned at Winchester. To gain the affections of his people he abolished the odious tax of Danegeld; he at the same time resumed the lavish grants of his predecessors to their Danish favourites. His conduct to his mother was rather harsh; under the pretext of her having neglected himself and his brother after her second marriage, he stripped her of her property, and confined her in the monastery of Wherwell, near Winchester.

According to a writer of little authority† the cause of Emma's confinement was said to have been the suspicion of her being too familiar with Ailwin bishop of Winchester. Emma, it is added, conscious of innocence, and indignant that the character of the pious prelate should be exposed to unmerited obloquy, offered to clear him by the ordeal of red-hot iron. After some opposition on the part of Robert the Norman archbishop of Canterbury, she was allowed to do so, and having implored the favour of the sainted prelate Swithun‡, she walked barefoot, blindfold, and uninjured, over nine red-hot ploughshares, four being

* The bride was the daughter of Osgod Clapa, from whom the adjoining Clapham, *i. e.* Clapa-ham, appears to have derived its name.

† Brompton.

‡ See above, p. 25.

for herself and five for the prelate. She and Ailwin then bestowed nine manors each on St. Swithun*.

The power of Godwin was now at its height: he himself ruled Wessex and Kent, his son Sweyn was over a large portion of Mercia, and Harold a third son was earl of East-Anglia and Essex, so that his influence extended over the whole south of England. The remaining part of Mercia was governed by earl Leofric†, Northumbria obeyed earl Siward; and England was thus in effect divided among three great families. Still Edward, though ruled by the Godwin family, never liked them; and in consequence of this dislike, or urged by that mean and mistaken piety which acquired him from the monkish writers the title of Confessor, he never claimed his conjugal rights from Editha the Fair. Godwin gradually became alienated from him, and the king's weakness soon furnished him with a popular subject of complaint. Edward, gentle and feeble in character and reared in Normandy, preferred the Normans, whose manners were more polished than those of the English. Numbers of them repaired to his court, where they were received with great favour, and the chief offices in church and court were committed to them. Their language, the Norman-French, also became that of the court. The popular jealousy was naturally excited, and Godwin secretly nourished it. At length an event occurred which brought matters to a crisis.

Eustace earl of Boulogne, the king's brother-in-law, having come over to England (1051) and stayed some time at court, proceeded to Dover on his return. He and his train entered the town in armour, and insisted on having free quarters. One of his men being refused admittance into a house, fell on and wounded its master;

* It was probably these manors that gave occasion to the legend. We need hardly observe that Brompton's book is of no authority whatever.

† This is the earl, who with his wife Godiva is famous in the Coventry legend of Peeping Tom.


the Dover-man slew the intruder; the alarm spread; Eustace and his men got to horse, and came and killed him on his own hearth. They then went through the town slaying all they met, but most of themselves lost their lives in the fray. Eustace hastened to court to complain, and Edward without inquiry ordered Godwin to repair to Dover, as it was in his earldom, and punish the town by military execution. Godwin refused, alleging that the people were not in fault. Matters speedily came to a rupture; Godwin and his sons Sweyn and Harold assembled an army and demanded the surrender of the earl and his followers. The king called on Siward earl of Northumberland and Leofric earl of Mercia to come to his aid, and they assembled their troops, which were also joined by those of Ralph, a Norman, who had been made earl of Worcester. The two armies approached each other in Gloucestershire, but no engagement ensued, as the majority in both declared against shedding the best of English blood in civil contest: a truce was effected; hostages were given on both sides, and it was agreed to refer the whole matter to a witenagemot to be holden at London. At the appointed time Godwin came with his troops to Southwark; but measures had been taken to reduce his strength; and finding he could not dictate, and that even his personal safety was not certain, he took to flight, and the Gemot passed a sentence of outlawry on him and his sons. The king gratified his spleen against the family by stripping the innocent Editha of all that she possessed, and confining her in the convent of Wherwell, of which his sister was abbess.

Godwin and his son Sweyn retired to Flanders, taking with them a ship laden with treasure; Harold sought refuge in Ireland. His earldom was given to Algar the son of Leofric, and a nobleman named Odda obtained the west part of Wessex. When the king's power was thus re-established, his cousin William, the young duke of Nor-

mandy, came over with a numerous train to visit him, and having spent a short time at the English court and witnessed the state of affairs, he returned home.

But though the Godwin family were outlawed they were not reduced. The old earl assembled a fleet (1052) in Flanders, Harold collected forces in Ireland, and having united their strength they appeared on the south coast, Surrey, Sussex, Kent and Essex declared for them; the peasantry joyfully supplied them with provisions; they sailed up to London, where the king was residing, and sent to demand the restitution of their honours. A denial being given, Godwin's troops became furious, but he restrained them, and having stationed them in the Strand (as the north bank of the Thames, west of the city wall, was named,) prepared for action. The king's troops were numerous, but they were loath to fight against their countrymen, and he was obliged to yield to their desire of an accommodation. A witenagemot was assembled, before which Godwin protested his own and his sons' innocence of all laid to their charge. His power was too great for his veracity to be questioned; all the forfeited honours and possessions were restored; the lady Editha also "sat in her honour." On the other hand, the foreigners with a few exceptions were outlawed, and the Norman bishops of Canterbury and Dorchester only saved their lives by a precipitate flight.

Godwin did not long enjoy his power; as he was sitting at the royal table the following Easter (1053) he fell down in a fit and died within a few days. The legend says, that the king had charged him with the murder of his brother Alfred, whereupon he cried, "May this morsel be my last if I did it!" and the piece of bread which he attempted to swallow choked him. His power and honours fell to his son Harold, who resigned East-Anglia to earl Algar, who had held it when he was himself an outlaw. On the death of his father Leofric (1057) Algar succeeded to Mercia,



and he then resigned East-Anglia, a part or the whole of which was given to Harold's brother Gurth. Algar was outlawed shortly after (1058) on a charge of treason; he retired to Griffith prince of Wales, who had married his sister, and he so wasted and destroyed the adjoining country that Harold was glad to make peace with him and let him resume his honours.

Harold had also an opportunity of extending his influence in the north. Duncan king of Scots had been treacherously murdered (1039) by one of the subordinate chiefs named Macbeth, who then expelled Malcolm the heir, and seized the crown. Malcolm after some time appealed to Edward as his superior lord, and by the king's directions earl Siward led an army into Scotland (1054), where he defeated and slew the usurper and placed Malcolm on the throne. Siward's eldest son had fallen in the battle; he died himself the following year*, and his remaining son Waltheof being too young to govern the earldom, Harold made the king confer it on his own brother Tosti. After some years, however, the thanes, weary of the tyranny of their new earl, rose against him and drove him away (1065). They appointed Morcar son of Algar and brother of Edwin, who had now succeeded his father in Mercia, to be their earl, and Harold deemed it prudent to acquiesce in their choice. England was now in effect divided between him and the sons of Algar.

The king, who had mounted the throne at the age of forty, being advanced in years and childless, began to think of appointing a successor. He therefore had summoned from Hungary his nephew Edward, named the Outlaw, the son of Ironside. The prince came (1057) with his

* When Siward heard of the death of his son he asked how he had fallen, and being told that his wounds were all in front, he said he was satisfied, and desired no better death for himself. When he felt his own death approaching, he declared he would die as a warrior, and arrayed in armour, with his spear in his hand, he breathed his last.

wife and three children, Edgar, Christina and Margaret ; but ere he had seen the face of the king he fell sick and died, to the great grief of all the people. The king, it is said, then passing over the young Edgar, whose incapacity was apparent, made a will appointing the duke of Normandy his successor. It is also said that Harold was the person who brought the duke the tidings of the bequest in his favour, but there is great contradiction in the various accounts of this matter. That Harold bound himself by oath to forward the views of William is a matter of little doubt ; how the oath was obtained is problematic. The common account is as follows : Godwin had been obliged to give one of his sons and a grandson to the king to be kept as hostages beyond sea ; and they had been committed to the charge of the duke of Normandy. Harold having procured Edward's permission for their release, proceeded in person (1065) to Normandy to obtain them. Being driven by a tempest on the coast of Ponthieu, he was, in accordance with the barbarous usages of the age, made a prisoner by the count, Guy, who expected to obtain a large ransom from him. Harold sent to inform the duke of Normandy, the count superior, of his being thus seized when he was on his way to the Norman court, and William forthwith ordered his vassal to transmit his captive to Rouen. Here Harold was treated with the utmost courtesy, and no objection was made to the release of his relations. William then took occasion to inform him of his pretensions to the crown, adding that the king intended to make a will in his favour : he desired the aid of Harold in furtherance of his claims, vowing the utmost gratitude and offering him the hand of his daughter Adela. Harold was astounded, but knowing himself to be in the duke's power, he promised everything. William required his oath ; Harold swore on the missal in the usual manner in presence of a large assembly ; the missal was then removed, and there appeared beneath it a vessel filled with the bones of

saints and other relics which William had caused to be placed there secretly, and on which Harold was now held to have sworn.

Another account says that the object of Harold's voyage was to inform William of king Edward's intentions in his favour. A third and more probable account is, that Harold was merely sailing along the coast of Sussex on business or pleasure, when a storm drove him to Ponthieu.

The life of the feeble monarch was fast drawing to its close. Aware of the approach of death he hastened the consecration of the abbey of Westminster which he had rebuilt. On Innocents' day (1065) the fane was dedicated in his name by queen Editha, and on the eve of the Epiphany (Jan. 5) he breathed his last, and was interred in the abbey the following day.

A prince more devoid of energy than Edward, is not to be found in history. His very external appearance displayed his character; his hair and skin being remarkably white, and his complexion rosy like that of a child. He was abjectly superstitious, for which he was canonised by the church, and miracles were invented for him. He was weakly indulgent and lavishly charitable. If he showed any symptoms of vigour it was in his love for the chase, between which and his prayers he divided his time. For the affectionate remembrance in which he was held by the English nation, he was more indebted to the Norman tyranny than to his own deserts; his reign was looked back to as halcyon days between the rigours of the Danish and Norman rule; and the laws of the good king Edward (meaning thereby not his code but the laws which prevailed in his time) were the constant demand of the people for near a century*.

It is perhaps not undeserving of notice that the Confessor was the first who touched for the king's evil.

* It is really amusing to see how Dr. Lingard strives to make something respectable out of the character of this royal saint.

HAROLD II. 1066.

It was said, and perhaps with truth, that as the late king lay on his death-bed he yielded to the importunity of Harold and named him to succeed. At all events, on the day of Edward's funeral Harold was crowned without opposition by Aldred archbishop of York. The southern counties, which he and his family had long governed, readily acknowledged his authority. To gain the good-will of the Northumbrians he made a progress to the north accompanied by Wulstan the good bishop of Worcester. His efforts were successful, and to bind Edwin and Morcar to his interests he espoused their sister Editha.

The news of the death of Edward and the coronation of Harold reached the duke of Normandy as he was hunting in his park near Rouen. The bow, it is said, dropped from his hand; he stood a few moments wrapt in thought, then threw himself into a boat, and crossing the Seine entered his palace, and after an interval of moody silence, he called his barons to council. By their advice he sent to require Harold to perform his engagements and resign the crown. The reply was such as might be expected, a refusal veiled under specious pretexts, in effect a defiance of the Norman power. Forthwith William summoned a parliament of his barons at Lillebonne, and though the nature of their tenures did not oblige them to cross the sea in the service of their liege-lord, they agreed at the impulsion of William Fitz-Osbern surnamed the Bold to aid in the conquest of England. Promises of rich rewards were made by the duke to stimulate them to exertion: similar promises were held forth in proclamations, and the flower of the chivalry of Brittany, Poitou, Anjou and other parts crowded to the standard of William the Bastard*.

The pope when applied to readily condemned the perjury of Harold, and he sent the duke a consecrated banner

* He was the natural son of duke Robert by a maiden of humble birth named Herleva or Arlotta.

and a ring containing a hair of St. Peter, at the same time stipulating for a more punctual payment of the Peter-pence*.

Meantime William aided Harold's brother Tosti, who was in Flanders, and enabled him to collect a force of sixty vessels, with which he passed over to the Isle of Wight, and began to ravage it and the adjacent coast. Being driven off by Harold's forces, he sailed away to Lindesey, but here finding Edwin and Morcar too strong for him, he went to Scotland, and at the end of the summer Harold Hardrada, king of Norway, to whom he had become a vassal, having entered the Tyne, he came and joined him. They thence sailed to the Humber, and went up the Ouse toward York. On the right bank of this river they were engaged (Sept. 20) by the earls Edwin and Morcar; the English were defeated with great slaughter, and the two earls were besieged in York.

King Harold, who had assembled a numerous fleet, and taken a position with his land-forces between Hastings and Pevensey to await the arrival of the Normans, on hearing of the landing of the Norwegians, led his troops with all speed to the north. He reached the neighbourhood of York four days after the defeat of Edwin and Morcar, and came up with the Norwegian king and a part of his forces. Tosti advised his ally to fall back to his ships; but the proud spirit of Hardrada spurned at retreat. He sent three messages to his ships, to summon his remaining warriors to his side, and then retiring to Stamford-bridge, on the Derwent, drew up his men in array of battle; his array was a hollow circle, in whose centre waved the Landeyda (*Land-waster*) the royal banner of Norway; the outer rank fixed their spears obliquely in the ground, while the second rank protruded *theirs*, so that the English, who were mostly cavalry, would impale their horses if they made a

* This was an annual tax of a penny a house, granted to the Holy See by king Ethelwulf.

charge. As Hardrada was riding round the circle to inspect it, his horse stumbled and threw him. "Who is that warrior in the blue mantle with a glittering helmet that has fallen?" inquired Harold; he was told it was the king of Norway. "He is a large and stately person," replied he, "but his fall shows that his end is at hand!" Harold then sent to Tosti, offering him the earldom of Northumbria and other honours, "That offer should have been made last winter," said Tosti, "but if I accept it what will be given to the king of Norway?" "Seven feet of ground, or as he is a very tall man, perhaps a little more," replied the envoy. "Go back," cried he, "and tell king Harold to make him ready for the fight, for never shall it be told in Norway that earl Tosti left Harold son of Sigurd and went over to his foes."

The fight began (Sept. 25): the English cavalry in their usual manner charged in masses, dispersed, re-assembled, and charged again. The ardour of their foes at length made them break their firm array to pursue them; the English rushed in at the opening; Hardrada fell pierced in the neck by an arrow. Tosti took the command; the troops from the fleet arrived: the battle continued till Tosti and every chief of name had fallen, and the evening closed on the complete victory of the English. Harold dismissed Olave the son of the fallen king in safety, and having taken possession of the fleet and booty, led his troops to York. Here, as he sat at his royal banquet, tidings came to him of the landing of the Normans in Sussex.

The preparations of the duke of Normandy being completed, a numerous fleet of vessels of all sizes assembled in the month of August at the mouth of the little river Dive, to convey his forces to England*. But the wind proved adverse for more than a month, and when at the time of the equinox it changed, and the armament put to sea, a

* See Appendix (F).



storm came on, and though the greater part of the ships escaped to St. Vallery, near Dieppe, several were lost, and the shore was covered with wrecks and the bodies of the drowned. To appease the wrath of Heaven, William caused the body of St. Vallery to be carried in solemn procession, and when the weather became serene the armament again put to sea; the duke's galley leading the way. This was the present to him of his wife Matilda; on its prow stood a golden boy, his right hand pointing to England, his left holding an ivory trumpet to his mouth. The vessels advanced so unequally, that when the duke reached the English coast many of them were still twenty leagues in the rear, and they would have been an easy prey to the English fleet if it had been at hand; but fortune favoured William in every way; the wind which he had deemed so adverse had only detained him till Hardrada had landed and drawn the disciplined forces of Harold to the north, and in that interval the English fleet had been obliged to disperse to get provisions, and the wind had not yet permitted it to re-assemble. He landed without opposition at Pevensey (Sept. 28), whence he advanced to Hastings, and raised fortifications at both places to protect his ships, which were speedily blocked up by the English fleet*.


It is said that when William sprang to land from his galley he stumbled and fell. The superstition of the age might have converted this into an ill omen, but the soldier who raised him had the presence of mind to avert it: seeing his hands full of mud, he cried, "Fortunate leader! you have already taken England! its earth is in your hands!"

Harold flew to London on hearing of the landing of the Norman; though he had lost some of his best troops in the late battle, and, it is said, had disgusted the rest by retaining the whole of the Norwegian spoil, he assembled within six days a force which he deemed sufficient to meet the in-

* Hence the falsehood appears of the story of his burning his ships.

vaders. He sent spies to ascertain their strength ; William, it is said, caused these men to be led through his camp and then dismissed. As the Normans shaved the upper lip, contrary to the English custom, the spies told Harold that they looked like an army of priests ; he laughed, and said, they would find these priests right valiant soldiers. Messages passed between the two rivals. William offered Harold the option of a legal trial of their claims, or a single combat. Harold replied that God should judge between them : his brother Gurth then urged, that as he had been so unfortunate as to be obliged to take an oath of fealty to William, it would be wiser for him not to enter the battle in person, but to let *him*, whose conscience was clear, lead the troops. Harold derided these apprehensions, and forthwith set out with his forces in the hopes of surprising the Normans like the Norwegians ; but William was too alert ; his scouts brought him timely word, and Harold giving over his plan of a night-attack, the two armies took a position at a place anciently named Senlac, now called Battle, from the event, eight miles on the London side of Hastings.

It was the laudable custom of that age for the warriors to employ themselves in devotional exercises the night previous to a battle, and to hear mass and receive the sacrament in the morning. With this the Normans complied, while the English, we are told, passed the night in feasting and revelry. At dawn (Oct. 15) Harold drew up his troops on the declivity of a hill in one compact solid mass ; their rear was protected by an extensive wood ; each man was covered by his shield and grasped a battle-axe, the ancient English weapon. The king and all his nobles, and other horsemen, dismounted and took their station with the rest ; in the centre waved the royal banner containing the figure of a fighting warrior woven in gold, and adorned with precious stones ; beneath it stood Harold and his brothers Gurth and Leofwin. On an opposite eminence the duke marshalled his troops in three lines, the first of archers, the



second of heavy infantry, the third of his numerous cavalry in five squadrons; the papal banner was raised in their front by Toustaine the Fair; William bore suspended from his neck the relics on which Harold had sworn.

The Normans raised their war-cry of "God help us!" and advanced; the English responded by shouts of "Holy rood! God's rood!" A Norman knight, it is said named Taillefer, preceded the army mounted on a stately horse, tossing his sword up in the air with one hand and catching it with the other, and singing aloud the deeds of the hero Roland; he slew two English warriors, but fell by the hand of a third. The Normans ascended the hill; their archers having discharged their arrows fell back on the infantry, but neither could make any impression on the English phalanx: the cavalry then charged; the battle-axe hewed them down; the Norman left wing, horse and foot, turned and fled; the opposite English broke from the mass and pursued; a report was spread that the duke had fallen; William took off his helmet and rode along the line. A body of cavalry got in the rear of the English, who had pursued; the fugitives turned, and the English were all cut to pieces. Again the Normans assailed the English phalanx; but firm and unmoved it withstood the shock. William then had recourse to stratagem; a part of his horse feigned flight; the English again broke and pursued: a deep ditch, concealed by vegetation, lay in the way: pursuers and pursued fell into it pell-mell, and the English were destroyed as before. The same stratagem was tried with the same success in another part of the line. Still the main body of the English stood unbroken around their king; but William had directed his archers to shoot upwards, that their arrows might fall down on their enemies, and by one of these Harold was wounded in the eye; his brothers were already fallen. Twenty Norman knights rushed to seize the royal banner; Harold was slain; the English broke and fled. It was now night, but the Nor-

mans pursued them by the light of the moon, and the fugitives turning on them where the place was full of ditches, took a severe vengeance for their defeat. Thus was this memorable battle terminated ; the victors lost in it a fourth of their number ; the loss of the vanquished, like their original number, is unknown.

William caused a spot near where Harold had fallen to be cleared, and pitched his tent there, in which he and his barons supped that night. He afterwards founded an abbey on that spot named Battle, in which prayers were to be continually offered up for the souls of those who had fallen.* Though Harold's mother offered its weight in gold for his body he refused it. He caused it to be buried on the sea-shore, saying, " He guarded the coast when living, let him still guard it now that he is dead." He seems, however, to have afterwards relented, and the remains of Harold finally reposed at the abbey of Waltham, which he had founded.†

* See Appendix (G).

† See Appendix (H).

CHAPTER VI.

THE ANGLO-SAXON CONSTITUTION*.

Division of the people.—Magistrates.—Division of the land.—Courts of justice.—Witena-gemot.—Punishment of crimes.—Ordeals.—Freeborn or Frankpledge.—Feudal usages.—The church.—The revenue.

IN our attempt to sketch the political condition of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers we will consider the people, the land and the institutions.

We have above observed the resemblance which England under the Saxons presented to the heroic age of Greece. In both the royal families were a peculiar caste, claiming its descent from the supreme deity adored by the people; both likewise had a class of landed nobility, and an inferior class of ignoble cultivators and artisans, and in both there was a class without personal freedom. This division of society was by no means, however, peculiar to them; it is to be found throughout a great part of the world, and seems to be a necessary result of human nature.

The name of the Anglo-Saxon nobility as a class was *Eorls* or *Eorlcundmen*†. They seem to have consisted of two parts, the *Hlafords* or Lords, those who were actually in the possession of land and its rights and privileges, and the *Sithcundmen*, or those who were noble by blood, but who had not landed property to entitle them to the rank of *Hlaford*‡. They were a kind of inferior nobility or gentry.

* For the subjects treated in this chapter see Palgrave's work already quoted, Hallam's Middle Ages, and Lingard's History of England. See also Allen's Enquiry into the Rise and Growth of the Royal Prerogative in England.

† In the Appendix (I) we will explain all the Anglo-Saxon terms which occur in the following pages.

‡ This is the hypothesis of sir F. Palgrave.

The inferior order of cultivators, answering to the *demos* of the Greeks, were named *Ceorles*. Like the nobility they seem to have consisted of two classes, those who had and those who had not property, the *Heorth-fastmen* or householders, and the *Folghers* or followers or labourers, answering to the farmers and farm-servants of the present day. The *Ceorl* was free, but he owed service to a lord; and though attached to the soil he had a property in it, and he could not be removed so long as he paid the customary dues, and rendered the usual services to his lord. He could also by acquiring a sufficient quantity of land rise into the class of the gentry.

Beneath these orders of freemen were the *Theowes* or slaves, who were the absolute property of their masters, like their cattle, and might be sold in the same manner. In fact there was a very active slave-trade carried on in England throughout the whole of this period*.

It is probable that the Anglo-Saxons brought this political division with them from their original country. The chiefs who served under Hengist, Ella, Cerdic and the other descendents of Wodin led the *Ceorles* who lived on their lands, and when the conquered lands were divided the same relation was continued. Numbers of the Britons, like the provincials of the continent, must have sunk into the same state of villenage; for it is utterly incredible that they could have been wholly driven out of the country. As the Germans, like most ancient nations, frequently reduced the vanquished to slavery, the first Anglo-Saxon *Theowes* may have been British captives; but crime and debt and captivity in war gradually reduced many of the dominant race to the same wretched state; and as the child followed the condition of the parent, the class of *Theowes* must have multiplied rapidly.

We read of a further division of the free population into

* See above p. 16.

three classes, according to the amount of their *weregild*, (a term we shall presently explain,) namely, *Twelfhænd*,- *Sixhænd*- and *Twihænd-men*. As the first were the Eorls, and the last the Ceorles, it is probable that the intermediate class were the Sithcundmen of the older times.

The kings and the great Hlafords being possessed of large quantities of land used to grant them to men who were strong and valiant, receiving in return their military services. These men, who were probably originally Sithcundmen, were denominated *Thanes* or *Knights*, i. e. servants. Their numbers gradually increased; they became the nobility and gentry of the counties; and their name took the place of that of Eorl. We find them divided into king's Thanes and lesser Thanes.

The chief magistrate of the nation was the *Cyning*, or king of the race of Wodin, but elected to the throne by the voices of the Witan. He held the chief command in war, was supreme judge, and appointed all the inferior magistrates. He exercised the same authority in the church. The *Ealdorman* was set over a shire as the king's vicerent; sometimes his jurisdiction extended over the whole of one of the former kingdoms. After the Danish conquest the title of Ealdorman was changed for that of Earl, answering to the Jarl of the North, and as we have seen, the title and power became hereditary in families. The *Gerefas* or reeves, formed a numerous class of functionaries, of which the principal were the Shire- Borough- and Port-reeves. They collected tolls, arrested malefactors, held courts, etc. The lords in their demesnes had also their reeves who performed similar offices.

The lands were divided into Folcland and Bocland, but it is very difficult to learn their exact nature. The Bocland is evidently that which was held by charter or grant, (*boc*, *book*,); the land of the thanes was of this kind, and it may be regarded as nearly the same as the *fief* or *feud* of the continent. The most probable opinion respecting the

Folc-land seems to be that which regards it as being the same with the Odal-land of Scandinavia, the Allodium of the continent, that is, land held in full propriety, the use of which might be transferred to another on condition of service*. The Folc-land would therefore appear to be the land originally seized by the chiefs and nobles of the invading armies, and parcelled out to their followers.

The first and lowest political division of the land was the Town or township. This was equivalent to the Manor of the Normans. It contained the land which the lord held in his own hands, that which he had granted by charter, those held by the Ceorles, and a quantity of common pasture for the use of the lord, his vassals and tenants. A second territorial division was into Hundreds: a still larger was into Shires, afterwards called Counties. Of these, some had been original kingdoms, others portions of such large divisions.

A regular succession of jurisdictions prevailed in these divisions. The Town had its *Mote* or court, commonly named the Hall-mote, as being held in the lord's hall; his reeve or steward usually presided. This officer was the lord's representative on most occasions; he received all his tolls and dues, and he superintended the Ceorles, who, however, had, it is said, the right of electing him to his office. The rights of the lord of a town extended to the levying of tolls and customs; he had the power of imposing fines for bloodshed and other breaches of the peace, and he might execute summarily the thief taken with the goods in his possession. In the Hall-mote we may discern the court-baron with civil, and the court-leet with criminal, jurisdiction of the present times, and in the reeve the modern steward of the manor.

The Hundred also had its court, named the Hundred- or Folc-mote. It was held once a month, and was pre-

* This is sir F. Palgrave's and Dr. Lingard's view. Mr. Allen regards it in a different light.

sided over by the Ealdorman, with whom sat the bishop of the diocese and all the lords and thanes whose lands lay within the bounds of the Hundred. Each town sent to it the reeve and four good men; the parish priests would also appear to have given their attendance. This court took cognizance of the crimes and misdemeanours committed within the Hundred; it tried civil actions; the contracts for the sale of lands were made and the money paid in it in the presence of the Hundredors, in order that they might afterwards bear witness if required; *land-bocs* or grants and charters were there read out and published.

The Shire-mote or county-court met twice a year. The bishop of the diocese and the ealdorman of the shire presided; all the landlords of the shire attended personally, or by their reeves, and each town sent its reeve and four good and lawful men. The rights of the crown, of the church, and of private persons, were here discussed and determined; *land-bocs* were read out, as in the Hundred-mote, with which it had much in common; the laws which had been enacted by the king in council were published.

The Witena-gemot was the senate or great council of the realm. While the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms were independent states each had of course its own Witena-gemot; that of Kent or Sussex could have differed but little from the Shire-mote of a later period, while those of Wessex and Mercia must have been of a higher order. When the whole island obeyed one monarch, the Witena-gemot rose into proportionate dignity. It sat thrice in each year,—at the festivals of Easter, Whitsuntide, and Christmas. The king appeared seated on his throne, with the crown on his head and a sceptre in each hand, and surrounded by his officers of state. The bishops and abbots, accompanied by a certain number of their inferior clergy, sat nearest the king; beneath them were the vassal Celtic and Cymric princes*, the ealdormen of shires, and the land-holders of

* The Welsh are called Cymry, the Scots and Manx were Celts.

the kingdom. The inferior people were allowed to be present, but they had no influence on the deliberations. In this great council of the realm all laws were enacted, taxes imposed, grants made or confirmed, and state criminals tried. On the death of the king the Witan chose the successor to the crown; their choice being however restricted to the royal line.

Of the crimes tried in these various courts some were *botelos* or inextinguishable, and were to be punished with death: such were treason, murder, desertion in war, housebreaking and open robbery. Other offences were punished by fine. In the case of homicide every class in the state had its particular *were* or price of blood. That of the Ceorls was 200 shillings, whence they were named Twihændmen; that of the Eorls or greater thanes, the Twelfhændmen, was 1200 shillings; the intermediate class of lesser thanes, apparently the ancient Sithcundmen, was 600 shillings, and they were therefore styled Sixhændmen. The Ealdorman's *were* was twice, the Atheling's thrice, the king's six times that of the Eorl or great thane*.

In another feature of Anglo-Saxon legislature the same principle of rating men's worth according to their standing in society also appears: the oath of a king's thane in compurgation was equivalent to those of six Ceorls. The origin of compurgation was as follows:

The Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence, like that of every people in a low state of civilization, did not admit of circumstantial evidence. When therefore the positive evidence against the accused was not thought sufficient to put his guilt beyond doubt, he had two ways of establishing his innocence; the one was the *læda* or purgation by oath, the other the *ordeal* or appeal to the judgement of God. Previously to either, however, it was requisite that his lord should testify to his character on oath. If then he pre-

* The principle of the *were*, as Palgrave justly observes, was precisely the same as that of *damages* in civil actions at the present day.

ferred the former mode, he first made solemn oath himself of his innocence, and he then produced his *compurgators* or joint swearers, who swore that "they believed his oath to be upright and clean." These compurgators must be his neighbours, who knew or were intimate with him; they must be "true" men, or men on whose character there was no imputation. Their number varied according to place and circumstances,—the want of the lord's testimony, or its being unfavourable to the accused, always caused it to be increased. The modern practice of calling witnesses to character is compurgation under another form, and in such cases the evidence of a nobleman or gentleman retains its natural and proportionate superiority of value.

The Ordeal was of two kinds, by water and by fire. In case of this mode being preferred, the accused was committed to the charge of the clergy, with whom he spent three days in fasting and prayer; on the third day he received the sacrament and again swore to his innocence, and he then proceeded to make the trial which was to prove it. If the ordeal was by water, a caldron full of water was set on a fire in a retired part of the church, and a stone or piece of iron was put into it; the depth of the water varying according to the presumptions for or against the accused. All strangers were excluded; the accuser and the accused, each attended by twelve friends, stood by the caldron in two opposite lines. Litanies having been recited, one from each line advanced and examined the water; if they agreed that it boiled and was of the proper depth, the accused, advanced, plunged in his arm and took out the stone or iron. The priest then wrapped a clean linen cloth about his arm, and put on it the seal of the church. On the third day it was opened; if the arm then appeared to be healed, the accused was pronounced to be innocent, if not, he was punished as guilty. In the ordeal by fire the process was nearly the same. Near the fire there was a small pillar, from which a space, equal in length to nine

of the prisoner's feet, was measured off, and divided by lines into three equal parts. When mass began, a piece of iron, of from one to three pounds' weight was laid on the fire, and at the last collect it was taken off, and placed on the pillar. The accused then grasped it, made three steps on the three lines, and threw it down. His hand was then bound up and all proceeded as in the other ordeal*.

The measure of police named Freeborh or Frankpledge was peculiar to the Anglo-Saxon constitution, but it is involved in much obscurity. It seems to have been of two kinds; the seignorial, by which the lord was held to be accountable for the conduct of his vassals, and was obliged to produce any of them against whom a charge was made; and the collective, by which the Ceorls in their *tithings* were *borhs* or security for each other. The tithing was of different extent in different places, but the smallest number of persons included in it was *ten*, whence its name. At the head of it was the Borhs-ealdor (corrupted to Bors-holder). The members of a tithing were a kind of perpetual bail for each other, so that if one of them committed an offence the rest were bound to produce him. If he fled, and the tithing could not clear themselves from the charge of conniving at his escape, they were compelled to make good the penalty if his own goods did not suffice. The institution of tithings did not prevail all through England, perhaps not to the north of the Trent. It does not seem to have been of much importance in the Anglo-Saxon times; but the Normans, probably regarding it as a good system of police, and a means of retaining the people in their allegiance, attached more value to it. The View of Frankpledge, or inquiry into the state of the tithings, became, after the Conquest, a part of the business of the

* It is not unlikely that the clergy of those times possessed the secret of our modern jugglers for fortifying the skin against fire.

court-leet; on this occasion the members of the tithing were always required to take the oath of allegiance.

It is a question how far the mode of trial by jury was known and practised by our Anglo-Saxon forefathers. There is certainly nothing to justify us in asserting that anything at all resembling the modern practice of twelve sworn men, being *judges* of the evidence given before them, formed any part of the Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence. Yet the germ of this institution, like those of so many others, may be discerned in the remaining chronicles and records*.

Another question is how far the peculiar usages of feudalism were in use among the Anglo-Saxons. At the conclusion of the following Part we will enter more fully into the nature of this institution; for the present we will only observe that it was by no means so peculiar to the barbarian-conquerors of the Western Empire as is usually supposed, its most important features, the relation of lord and vassal and the granting of lands for service, being found in many distant regions. With respect to lordship and vassalage, the terms Thane and Knight, and many places of the laws and chronicles, give abundant proof of its existence among the Anglo-Saxons from the earliest times; and even the peculiarity of a *relief*, or fine paid on the death of the holder of a fief, occurs under the name of *heriot*†, it being a certain quantity of arms, money, horses, and in some cases hawks and hounds, given to the king, in order to preserve the estate to the family. We may therefore say, that though neither the name nor form of feudalism appears before the Conquest, the principle of it existed in Saxon England.

The prelates of the Anglo-Saxon church were appointed by the king, subject to the confirmation of the pope. If

* See Hallam, *Middle Ages*, ii. 400.

† The *heriot* is not mentioned in any laws previous to those of Canute; but there is sufficient proof of its being in his time an ancient usage. See Lingard, i. p. 323.

they committed offences they were deprived and punished by sentence of the great council. The inferior clergy when they committed crimes were punished, like the laymen, by the secular tribunals. No claims of privilege or immunity were made or admitted. The lands of the church were also subject to the ordinary impositions for the public service. Ecclesiastical canons were made in the Witenagemots. At the same time the clergy enjoyed a high degree of public consideration; the bishop ranked in all respects with the Ealdorman or Earl; a priest's oath was equivalent to those of one hundred and twenty Ceorles; the Mass-thane or clergyman stood on a par with the World-thane or gentleman. In doctrine, the Anglo-Saxon church agreed with that of Rome, and it had, as we have seen, its full share of errors, false miracles, and pious frauds. As transubstantiation had not yet been established by the papal authority, it of course formed no part of the public system of the Anglo-Saxon church, whatever may have been the sentiments of some individuals among the clergy.

The revenue of the Anglo-Saxon kings was chiefly derived from the domains which they held in their own hands, being for the most part the portion of the spoil which fell to them at the time of the Conquest. Their tenants paid them rents in money or kind; they also received tribute from the inhabitants of the great towns, and in some cases from the subject princes. A part of the royal revenue arose from the fines imposed on criminals.

A threefold obligation (*trinoda necessitas*) lay on all the holders of land in the kingdom. This consisted of the *Bricgbote*, or tax for the repair of roads and bridges; the *Burhbote*, or that for maintaining the fortresses; and the *Fyrd*, i. e. militia, or general array of military service for the defence of the realm. The church was subject to these obligations equally with the other parts of the community, abbots, for example, having to furnish men for the Fyrd in proportion to the lands held by their monasteries. The

tax named Danegeld was in like manner levied on all without exception.

From this sketch of their political condition it is evident that the Anglo-Saxons were properly speaking a *free* people. All classes had their rights, and could maintain them in the various courts of justice; the crown was confined to a certain line, and had its recognised rights; the aristocracy was strong, but without any oppressive privileges or unjust exemptions; the clergy were subject to the civil power. In a word, rude as our ancestors were, they possessed, by a fortunate casualty probably rather than design, the framework of that wonderful political phenomenon, the actual British constitution, the progress of which shall be shown in the following pages. Those writers and declaimers should not be heeded who pretend to discern its perfect state in the institutions of these rude ages; political, like natural constitutions, are the slow growth of time; but as the oak is contained in the acorn, as in the child we may discover the future man, so in the earliest, simplest form of a state we may discern its mature condition. It also appears to be an idle dream of benevolent theorists to suppose that political principles and institutions are communicable; each people seems to have its idiosyncrasy, as we may term it; and as far as we have had experience to guide us, we think we are justified in believing that parliaments, juries, and the other institutions of the Anglo-Saxon race will never attain to permanence, vigour, and utility among the nations of different blood and origin*.

* We do not regard the French Chambers or their trial by jury as favourable specimens of imitation. It is needless to speak of Spain and Portugal. The attempt during the late war at giving a constitution to the Sicilians was only deserving of laughter. Lower Canada does not offer a very consolatory prospect to the legislative empirics. We advise them to be very cautious in their attempt at introducing British institutions into India.

ANGLO-NORMAN PERIOD.

CHAPTER I.

WILLIAM I. (THE CONQUEROR.)*


1066—1087.

Coronation of William ; his return to Normandy.—Conquest of the West and North of England.—Hereward.—Rebellion of Norman Nobles.—Dissensions in the Royal Family.—Fall of Bishop Odo.—War with the King of France.—Death and funeral of the Conqueror ; his character.

THE duke of Normandy, after his victory at Hastings, led his troops eastwards along the coast, spoiling and ravaging on his way. As the people of Romney had attacked and defeated some Normans who had landed there he burned the town and massacred the inhabitants ; he then advanced to Dover, which town was likewise partly burned and the castle forced to surrender. After a delay of eight days on account of the dysentery which prevailed among his troops he directed his march toward London ; on his way he was met by a deputation of the Kentish men, offering to submit on his engaging to respect their liberties and rights†.

* Authorities :—Saxon Chron. Malmsbury, Huntingdon, Westminster, Hoveden, Knighton, Bromton, Paris, Florence, Simeon, Alured, Ingulf, Mailros, Burton, Ordericus, Pictaviensis, Gemmatensis.

† The vanity of the monks of St. Augustine invented the following legend. Their abbot Egelsin united with Stigand in calling a meeting of the men of Kent, and impressing on them the necessity of defending their liberties and customs. They therefore assembled in arms under the primate and abbot, by whose directions every man bore a large branch of green wood, and they occupied all the passes. As the Normans advanced from Dover they suddenly beheld themselves as it were enveloped by a moving forest, which every moment drew nearer. All at once the boughs fell, and horse and foot appeared in martial array, with banners raised, bows bent, and swords unsheathed.



The Witan and the citizens of London had meantime placed the Atheling Edgar on the vacant throne, and on account of his incapacity the direction of affairs was committed to Stigand the primate and the earls Edwin and Morcar; but disunion prevailed in their councils, and many of the higher clergy it is said, swayed by the authority of the pope or hoping advantage from it, were for submission to the Norman, who had now reached Southwark, which suburb he burned, after routing those who came out to oppose him; he then turned, and having plundered Surrey, Sussex, Hants and Berks, crossed the Thames at Wallingford, whence he moved to Berkhamstead. Bucks and Herts were now laid waste; the supplies were cut off from London; Edwin and Morcar had retired home. Resistance seeming hopeless, Stigand and other deputies on the part of the clergy and people entered the camp of the Norman and swore fealty to him. The following Christmas was appointed for the coronation: William meanwhile encamped a few miles from the city till a fortress (the origin of the present Tower) should have been raised for his security. On the appointed day (Dec. 25) he proceeded to Westminster Abbey, where the ceremony was to be performed by the archbishop of York, (Stigand being under a sentence of suspension). A guard of Norman horse surrounded the abbey, in which the English were already assembled. William entered with his nobles; the ceremony began; the bishop of Constance asked the Normans in French if they would have their duke crowned king of England; a similar question was put to the English in Saxon by the prelate of York. Instantly a loud cry of assent arose from all parts of the edifice. The Normans outside fancying, or pretending to do so, that the English were assailing those within, set fire to the neighbouring

William, fearing the event of a conflict, acceded to their demands, and hostages were exchanged. See Thorn, p. 1786. *Pictaviensis*, who was present says, "*Occurrunt ultro Cantuarii, jurant fidelitatem, dant obsides.*"

houses; those who were in the church rushed out, the English to save their lives and property, the Normans to share in the plunder, and William was left alone with the archbishop and a few ecclesiastics of both nations. The trembling priests received from the monarch, whose terror nearly equalled their own, an oath to govern the English people as they had been governed by the best of their native kings.

William, who is henceforth named the Conqueror*, manifested a laudable anxiety to gain the affections of his new subjects; he granted new privileges to the citizens of London; he put down the bands of robbers which now infested the country; he protected travellers and merchants; he was accessible to all; he even made an attempt to learn the English language. At Barking, whither he retired after his coronation, he was waited on by Edgar, Edwin, Morcar, Coxo, and a crowd of other nobles and thanes, who did him homage and were confirmed in their estates and honours. He then made a progress through the neighbouring counties to gain the people by his affability and courtesy.

To reward his followers he confiscated the estates of those who had fought against him at Hastings, affecting to regard them as traitors. By these foreigners who thus settled in England numerous castles were erected to secure their possessions, and in each town the king raised a fortress in which he placed a Norman garrison. These measures occupied his attention during the early part of the year (1067); in the month of March, in compliance with the desires of his Norman subjects, he prepared to revisit Normandy; and having committed the direction of affairs in England to Odo bishop of Bayeux, his uterine brother, and William Fitz-Osbern, he led such of his troops as were returning home to Pevensey, where having distributed

* *Conqueror*. It simply means *acquirer*; he claimed the crown by legal right.


rich presents among them he embarked, taking with him Edgar, Edwin, Morcar, Stigand and other English of note, under the pretext of doing them honour, but in reality that they might serve as hostages for the obedience of the people. He was received with the greatest demonstrations of joy by his native subjects, who were amazed at the quantity of wealth he had acquired, and who gazed in surprise at the magnificence displayed by his English followers. To the monasteries which had put up prayers for his success he made costly offerings; to the pope he sent the banner of Harold and a large quantity of gold and silver.

While William was thus displaying his liberality in Normandy, those whom he had left behind in England were driving the people to desperation by their tyranny and oppression, and it was in vain that redress was sought from the regents, who gave no heed to their complaints. Resistance therefore began to be made in various parts; the people of Kent invited over Eustace count of Boulogne to their aid, offering to put him in possession of Dover. He landed and was joined by the neighbouring people, but failing to take the castle by assault he lost courage and re-embarked his troops with some loss. In Hereford the English under the command of a chief named Edric the Wild and aided by the Welsh, drove the Normans out of the country. A general confederacy against the strangers was organised; the nobles who had submitted were secretly invited to put themselves at the head of it, and Coxo was actually assassinated for persisting in his fidelity to the Conqueror.

When intelligence of what was going on came to the ears of William he returned to England without delay, although it was now mid-winter; he kept his Christmas at London, where he lavished his caresses on the English prelates and nobles who appeared at court, and issued a proclamation to the citizens assuring them of his intentions

to govern them according to their ancient laws and to secure them in their property. Having thus soothed the people of London, he set out (1068) with his troops for Devon, where the people were in arms, and prepared to lay siege to Exeter; as he was approaching a deputation met him, offering to pay as tribute a sum equal to what they had paid their former kings, but declining to swear allegiance; he refused to listen to these terms; his troops advanced to the assault, the English being placed in front; ere the assault was made the magistrates came forth, sued for peace and gave hostages; but on their return the citizens refused to ratify the peace, closed the gates and prepared for defence. William then put out the eyes of one of the hostages in their view and invested the town; the siege lasted eighteen days with great loss on the part of the besiegers; at length the walls were undermined and the city was forced to surrender. The whole of Devonshire and the adjoining British Cornwall were speedily reduced; about the same time Somerset and Gloucester were also subdued and the land seized and divided.

Those who were dispossessed of their lands, and the lovers of liberty in general, gradually retired to the north, whither the Normans had not as yet penetrated. Edwin, Morcar and other chiefs secretly repaired thither; an alliance was formed with the Welsh and with Malcolm king of Scotland (at whose court Edgar had taken refuge, and who afterwards married his sister Margaret), and an extensive plan of resistance to the Normans was formed. It is said that in the conquered country a secret plan for assassinating them (like the Danes in the time of Ethelred) on a festival, when they would be without arms, was projected; but it was discovered, and those most deeply engaged in it had to seek safety in flight. William, resolving to strike the first blow, led his troops northwards; he took Oxford by assault, massacred the inhabitants, and burned a great part of the town. The same was the fate



of Warwick, Leicester, Nottingham and Derby; Lincoln was forced to capitulate, and William then crossed the Humber. The English and their confederates gave him battle; they were routed and fled to York; that city also was taken by assault, and all in it massacred without distinction; a fortress was erected there and strongly garrisoned to keep the surrounding country in awe. It does not appear that the king marched much further north, for the Normans were grown weary of the service, and desirous of returning to their wives and families.

The next year (1069) Edmund and Godwin the sons of Harold came with some ships from Ireland, and made descents in Somerset and Devon, where the people rose against the Normans, but their efforts were crushed by the troops (chiefly English) sent against them, and the sons of Harold were forced to retire. The people of Cheshire and the adjoining country also rose, but the king marched in person against them, and one battle terminated their hopes. But though the English no longer made head in the field, their irregular bands did the Normans great mischief, and frequent ambuscades kept the enemy in terror. The governor of York wrote to the king to say that unless reinforced he could not hold out; William hastened thither and found the castle actually besieged; he speedily dispersed the assailants and then commenced the erection of a second castle; and being resolved to extend his dominion, he sent Robert de Comines or Cumin with twelve hundred horsemen and a large number of footmen to occupy the city of Durham. As Cumin approached that town, the bishop came to meet him and warned him of his danger; but he treated the warning with contempt, and having put some of the inhabitants to death he took up his quarters in the bishop's house. In the night beacons flamed on all the adjacent heights, and at dawn the gates of the town were forced and the English poured in and slaughtered the Normans; the bishop's house was set on fire and Cumin and

all in it perished. Troops were ordered from York and elsewhere to avenge this massacre, but the soldiers on reaching Northallerton refused to advance.

The people of the north and east of England ceased not to solicit their kinsmen of Denmark to come to their aid against the Normans; William, on his part, sent his most adroit bishops with rich presents to Sweyn king of Denmark to induce him to remain at peace. But the Danish monarch, urged by his subjects, sent this year a fleet of two hundred and forty ships under his brother and his two sons, which entered the Humber in the autumn: the people rose to join them; Edgar, Edwin, Morcar, and the other exiles hastened from Scotland, and their united forces advanced joyfully and confidently to the attack of York. The townspeople aided the invaders; the castles were carried by assault, the garrisons slaughtered, the governors led prisoners to the Danish fleet, and the castles rased. The Danes then stationed their fleet for the winter in the Humber, Ouse, and Trent.

This invasion of the Danes, and the capture of York, caused William great concern. To secure the obedience of the English of the south he restrained the insolence of his soldiers, and made some slight concessions, but he best succeeded in weakening his enemies by prevailing on the uncle of the Danish princes, by the promise of a large sum of money, to induce them to depart at the end of winter. He then (1070) set out for York, at the head of his best troops, and carried the city by assault. Edgar and the other chiefs fled to Scotland; the Normans spread over Northumberland, burning towns and villages, and slaughtering men and cattle alike; and from the Humber to the Tyne there did not remain an inhabited town or a field in cultivation; all was one desert covered with ruins of towns, houses and convents: the lands of St. John of Beverley alone escaped the general calamity, owing, says the legend, to the visible interposition of the saint. On the banks of

the Tees, Waltheof and other chiefs entered the camp of the Conqueror and made their submissions anew, and Waltheof received the hand of his niece Judith, and the earldom of Huntingdon and Northampton. William then had the regalia brought to York, where he kept his Christmas in great pomp. But meantime famine preyed on the wretched country, and more than one hundred thousand persons perished north of the Humber.

All England was now subdued under the Normans. The inferior people, in general, submitted to the yoke they could not avoid; the higher classes had partly fallen in the field, or by the sentence of military tribunals; some had fled to Scotland, some to the North; a band of daring spirits, led by Siward earl of Gloucester, went by sea to Constantinople, where the emperors had long kept a body-guard of Scandinavians, named Varangs (*Warriors*), and entered into this service, and others soon followed their example. Others again took to the woods at home, whence they issued and attacked the Normans on the highways, and plundered those who had submitted to them. The chief seat of these outlaws, as they were named, were the isles of Ely and Thorney, in the fens of Cambridgeshire; their Camp or Fort of Refuge*, as it was called, was secured by defences of earth and wood, and Morcar, Aylwin bishop of Durham, and several other nobles and spiritual dignitaries gradually repaired to it.

William now (1071) proceeded, in concert with the pope, who sent three legates for the purpose, to depose, under various pretexts, the principal Saxon prelates and abbots, and give their places to strangers. Stigand was deprived of Canterbury, and that see was given to Lanfranc, a Lombard by birth, and Thomas, one of the king's chaplains, obtained that of York, the ancient claims of which to equality with Canterbury he was forced to resign, and Lanfranc

* *Castra Refugii, castrum ligneum.* Paris says that in his time it was still called the *Castellum Herewardi*.

was now styled the primate and father of all the churches in England. Many of these new dignitaries lived in a state of continued hostility with the clergy under them, whom they insulted, persecuted, robbed, and sometimes even murdered*.

There was at this time living in Flanders an Englishman named Hereward. Hearing from the exiles that his father was dead, his heritage given to a Norman, and his mother in great distress, he set out for England, and assembling a troop of his relations and vassals, he attacked and expelled the intruder. Necessity obliging him to maintain by force what he had seized by force, he was engaged in ceaseless conflicts with the Normans, and as he was mostly victorious, his fame spread far and wide, and his deeds were the theme of the popular ballads; his lands lying at Brunn (Bourne) near Croyland, his exploits were well known to those in the Camp of Refuge, and at their request he went thither and took the chief command.

The efforts of Ivo de Taille-bois, an Angevin, to whom William had given lands in that neighbourhood, and of Turauld the Norman abbot of Peterborough, to reduce the outlaws, proving fruitless, the king took the field in person against them. To reach their retreat he found it necessary to construct a causeway three miles in length over the marshes. Hereward, by his sorties, so impeded the work, that the Normans fancied he was aided by the evil one, and to fight him at his own weapons Taille-bois brought a sorceress and placed her in a wooden tower, in advance of the works, to perform her incantations. But Hereward made a sudden sally, set fire to the reeds, and burnt the sorceress and most of the soldiers that were at work. At length treachery effected what force could not achieve; the monks of a convent in the Isle of Ely, weary of privation, sent to say to the king, that if he pledged

* See Appendix (K) for proofs and examples.


himself to leave them their property, they would enable his troops to enter the isle unperceived. This offer was accepted; the camp was suddenly assailed; many were slain, the rest were forced to surrender. Hereward and a few other brave men made their escape through the marshes, and he continued to be, as before, the terror of the Normans. At length, if we may trust the very dubious authority of a metrical history, a Saxon lady named Alfrud, who had large possessions, charmed with his valour, gave him her hand, and at her desire he made his peace with the king. But the Normans, who dreaded him, gave him no rest, and one day as he was sleeping in the open air after his dinner, he was fallen on by a troop of armed men; with only a short lance and his sword, he killed, says the rhymer, sixteen of the assailants before he fell*. It became a common saying, he adds, that if England had had three more like him, it had never been conquered. The treacherous monks of Ely suffered (and no one can pity them) for their treason to their country; a party of Norman soldiers was quartered on them; they had to pay one thousand marks; their plate and ornaments were seized, and their lands made fiefs for the Normans. Morcar was sent a prisoner to the continent, where he remained during the remainder of William's reign. When his brother Edwin heard of his captivity, he attempted to raise a force in the North; but he was betrayed by three of his followers, and his flight being impeded by a stream which was swollen by the influx of the tide, he was slain after a gallant defence. The traitors brought his head to the Conqueror, but their reward was perpetual banishment. Lucy, the sister of Edwin and Morcar, was given in marriage, with all their pos-

* MS. poem of Gayomer, quoted by Thierry. Gayomer lived in the reign of Henry I. Ingulf simply says, that he made his peace with the king, ended his days in tranquillity, and was buried with his wife at Croyland. He also says, that Hereward's wife, named Thurfred, had returned with him from Flanders.

sessions, to Taille-bois, who exercised over his English vassals the utmost tyranny and oppression.

After the reduction of the outlaws of Ely William led his troops northwards. He entered Scotland and marched unopposed to the banks of the Tay, and Malcolm was forced to do him homage for his kingdom. Soon after (1073) William, with an army of English, passed over to the continent to take advantage of a dispute between the count of Maine and his subjects. The mingled valour and ferocity of the English could not be withstood, and the whole province submitted to William, who led his troops laden with booty back to Normandy.

While William was absent (1075), a rebellion, headed by Norman nobles, broke out in England. Roger earl of Hereford, son of William Fitz-Osbern, had engaged his sister Emma to Raulf de Guader, a Breton, earl of Norfolk. The king, it is not known why, sent to forbid the match, but heedless of the royal mandate, Roger conducted his sister to Norwich, and the wedding feast, to which Norman, Saxon, and Welsh nobles and prelates were invited, was held. When heated with wine the guests gave a loose to their tongues against the king, abusing his birth, and declaiming against his avarice and his ingratitude. The two earls then proposed to Waltheof, who was of the party, to join in an insurrection against William, who, they said, would never return, adding, that then one of them should be king, and the other two rule under him; Waltheof, though he did not assent, promised secrecy; bishops and barons, knights and warriors, swore to be faithful to the cause, and Roger went home without delay to make the needful preparations. The conspiracy, however, was easily crushed; earl Roger was defeated and taken before he could pass the Severn, and Guader and his troops were routed by bishop Odo and William de Warrenne. The victors cut off the right foot of all their prisoners. Guader



fled to Brittany ; his bride defended the castle of Norwich till forced by famine to surrender. The estates of both the earls were confiscated, and Roger was condemned to perpetual imprisonment*.

The fate of Waltheof was more severe. He had only been guilty of what is called misprision of treason ; but his wife Judith had fixed her affections on another, and Ivo de Taille-bois and others coveted his lands. The royal council were divided in their sentiments, and the earl lay a prisoner at Winchester during an entire year. At length his enemies prevailed, sentence of death was passed, and early in the morning, (1076) while the people of Winchester were in their beds, (lest they might attempt a rescue,) he was led to an eminence without the town, and there beheaded. By the English he was regarded as a martyr, and miracles, it was believed, were wrought at his tomb in the abbey of Croyland. His faithless wife did not go unpunished. The king ordered her to marry a knight named Simon of Senlis ; she refused, as Simon was lame and deformed ; the king then gave Simon the eldest daughter and the estates of Waltheof, and Judith passed the remainder of her days in poverty and contempt.

The last English earl was now gone, and William next proceeded to depose the last English prelate. Wulfstan of Worcester was summoned before a council at Westminster, and ordered by the king and Lanfranc to resign his staff and ring, because as he could not speak French he could not, it was alleged, discharge episcopal functions in England. Wulfstan, says the legend, stood up, walked to the tomb of king Edward, and said, " Edward, thou gavest me this pastoral staff ; to thee then I commit it." Then turning round, he cried, " A better than thou gave it to me ; pluck it away if thou canst." He struck it into the solid tomb, whence no one could extract it till the sentence

* See Appendix (L).

was revoked; it then yielded to the touch of the Saxon prelate*.

Family dissensions now came to disturb the peace of the king of England. He had three sons, Robert named Gamberon, or Curthose, from the shortness of his legs; William, called Rufus, or the Red, from his ruddy complexion; and Henry, for whom his love of letters gained the title of Beauclerc. Robert had the nominal government of Normandy, under his mother Matilda, and the Norman barons had been allowed to do him homage. When he grew up he claimed to be put in possession of the duchy, but met with a flat refusal. An accident occurred to augment his discontent. The king being at a place named L'Aigle with his three sons, (1078) William and Henry, who were opposed to Robert, came to where he lodged, and going into an upper room, began to play at dice, making a great noise, and even poured water down on him as he was walking before the door. Robert in a rage drew his sword, and ran up stairs to slay them; the alarm was given; the king hastened to the spot, and with difficulty appeased the tumult. But that very night Robert set out with his partisans, and attempted to surprise the castle of Rouen. Some time after (1079) he fixed himself at the castle of Gerberoy on the frontiers. The king came in person and besieged the castle; one day, in a sortie, Robert wounded and unhorsed a knight. At the voice of the fallen man he recognised his father, and he instantly alighted and helped him to his horse. The remonstrances of the prelates and barons, and the tears and entreaties of the queen, produced a new reconciliation, but soon after Robert went away again and did not return during his father's lifetime†. He spent his time in rambling through France and Germany, making his complaints to princes

* This legend, we believe, occurs only in the fabler Bromton.

† Queen Matilda died in 1083.

and nobles, and soliciting aid ; but all the money he got he gave away to loose women and buffoons.

After the death of Waltheof the king had sold the government of the country between the Tweed and Tyne to Walcher bishop of Durham, a native of Lorraine, who exercised the most intolerable oppression over the people ; his officers, among other violent acts, put to death a Saxon, named Liulf, who had retired to Durham when deprived of his property, and who was dear to his countrymen (1080). The spirit of the people was roused, a secret conspiracy was organized, and it was agreed that they should bring their arms concealed with them to the county court that was to be held at Goat's head (Gateshead) on the banks of the Tyne. At the court they claimed reparation for the various acts of injustice that had been committed. The bishop demanded previously four hundred pounds of good money ; the spokesman retiring as if to confer with the rest, cried out to them in their own language, " Short rede, good rede, slea ye the bisshope !" They drew their weapons, and the bishop and one hundred of his followers were slain*. The insurrection extended, but the bishop of Bayeux marched with an army to the north, ravaged the country, pillaged the cathedral of Durham, and slaughtered and mutilated the people without any distinction.

This tyrannical prelate's fall was at hand. Inflated with his rank and wealth he aspired to the papacy ; he sent large sums of money to Rome, where he had purchased a house, and was proceeding thither himself (1082) with a numerous train of barons and knights whom he had persuaded to accompany him, when the king, who had been

* Paris. Malmesbury and some others relate the transaction somewhat differently. Liulf according to these writers stood so high in the favour of the beatified Cuthbert, that the saint used to appear to him both by day and by night.

informed of his plans, and who did not desire to see him on the papal throne, met him on the high sea, off the Isle of Wight, and brought him back to that island, where before an assembly of the nobles he accused him of various acts of oppression and treason. "Consider now," said he, "and say how I should act toward such a brother." All were silent. "Seize him, and confine him," then cried the king. None venturing to lay hands upon the prelate, the king himself seized him. "I am a clerk and a minister of the Lord," cried Odo. "I condemn not a clerk or a priest, but my count whom I set over my kingdom," replied the monarch. Odo was then sent a prisoner to a castle in Normandy.

The Northmen, who had so often deceived the hopes of the English, at length (1085) prepared to attempt their liberation from the yoke of the Normans; Canute of Denmark, aided by Olave of Norway and Robert earl of Flanders, had collected a great fleet and army for the purpose. William assembled a large army to oppose them; he re-imposed the Dane-geld; he obliged the English to assume the Norman habit that they might not be distinguishable; he laid waste the whole of the north-east coast, and he hired such a number of mercenaries on the continent, "that," says the Saxon Chronicle, "men wondered how the land might feed them all." The expedition, however, never sailed; various causes, among which are enumerated the bribes of the king of England, detained it for more than a year, and at length a mutiny broke out in which Canute was slain by his own soldiers, and the hopes of the English expired with him (1086).

The following year (1087) William quitted England laden with the curses of the people. He stayed at Rouen, whence he carried on negotiations with the king of France relative to the territory of the Vexin, and by the advice of his physicians he took medicines and kept his bed, in order to reduce his excessive corpulence. One day the king of

France said, joking, "By my faith, the king of England is a long time lying in! There will be great doings at his churching." This being reported to William, he flew into a rage, and swearing his most solemn oaths by the splendour and by the birth of God, that when he got up from his lying-in he would light a thousand tapers* in France, he assembled his troops, entered the Vexin (Aug. 10), and destroyed the standing corn, the vines, and fruit-trees; he set the town of Mantes on fire, and as in his rage and impatience he galloped through the ruins, his horse chancing to tread on some hot embers, threw him forward on the pommel of the saddle. A dangerous rupture ensued; he was conveyed to a monastery near Rouen, where he languished for six weeks. As he felt the approach of death his conscience smote him; he sent money to rebuild the churches at Mantes, and to the convents and the poor of England, and at the desire of his prelates and barons he ordered the state prisoners, both English and Norman, to be set at liberty. Aware of the turbulent character of his brother Odo, he long refused to include him; but he yielded at length to the entreaties of his friends. He made his will, leaving Normandy to his son Robert, and England to William. "And, father," said Henry, "what will you give me?" "I give you five thousand pounds out of my treasure." "But of what use is it if I have no place of abode?" "Trust in God, my son; let thy elders precede thee; thy time will come after theirs†." Henry went off to receive the money, which he had accurately weighed, and got a strong chest to keep it in. William, by his father's directions, set out for England, and the king was left with only his servants.


At sunrise, on the 10th of September, the king was awakened by the ringing of a bell. On inquiry he was told that it was for primes at the church of St. Mary; he

* Women when being churched used to bear a lighted taper in their hand.

† Lingard justly remarks that "this prophecy was probably invented after Henry's accession to the throne."

raised his hands, saying, "I commend myself to my lady Mary the holy mother of God, that by her prayers she may reconcile me to her son, my Lord Jesus Christ," and immediately expired. Instantly his physicians and other attendants mounted their horses, and went home in haste to protect their houses and property; the servants then pillaged the royal abode, carrying off arms, clothes, and everything of value, and the corpse lay for some hours nearly naked on the floor, for the people of the town were nearly beside themselves with terror of what might happen now that the check of the royal authority was removed. At length some of the clergy having recovered their senses, came with tapers and censers, and prayed for the soul of the departed. The archbishop of Rouen directed that the corpse should be conveyed to Caen, to be interred in the church of St. Stephen which the king had founded; but none would take the charge, till a knight, named Herluin, moved by compassion, brought it thither at his own expense. The monks of St. Stephen's and many of the clergy and laity came forth to receive it, but a fire just then breaking out in the town, they all ran to extinguish it, leaving the monks alone.

On the day of the burial, prince Henry, the Norman prelates and abbots, and a great multitude of people were assembled in the church; the mass was said, and the corpse was about to be lowered into the grave before the altar, when a voice from the crowd cried out, "Clerks and bishops, this ground is mine; it is the site of my father's house; the man you are praying for took it from me to build his church; on the part of God I forbid the body of the despoiler to be covered with my mould." The speaker was Asselin Fitz-Arthur, to whom William had often denied justice; the bishops finding his demand just, paid him sixty shillings for the grave, and promised him the full value of the rest of the land. The ceremony then proceeded, but the grave proving too narrow, as they tried to force down



the body, which was in the royal robes, and without a coffin the belly burst, and the smell was so offensive as to drive the assistants out of the church.

The Conqueror was doubtless a man of very great ability, superior to all the princes of his time. "He was," says the *Saxon Chronicle*, "a very wise man, and very rich, and more splendid and stronger than any of his predecessors were. He was mild to the good men that loved him, but beyond all measure severe to the men that opposed his will. So stern was he and wrathful, that no man durst do anything against his will. In his time had men much distress, and very many sorrows. He made his men ruin, and miserably swink the poor. The king was very stern, and took from his subjects many a mark of gold, and many hundred pounds of silver, that he used with right and with great unright from his people as their own. He was taken into covetousness, and greediness to love his wealth. He made great deer-parks, and wherever he went he killed a hart or a hind, and he forbade (to touch) the hares, or other the beasts: he loved the tall deer as if he were his own. He was very stern to the hares and they must be killed. He was very stern to the poor men, and the poor men must be killed. He was so stern that he recked not all that he did, for they must follow all the king's will if they would live in his land or even his peace."

As can be seen from a contemporary and one who lived at his court, no discern the imperious ruler, the man of unusual energy sufficient to hold in check the haughty magnates of his victories; and to this energy he united that vulgar ardor for which the Normans were at that time noted all over Europe. In his person the Conqueror was of middle stature; his countenance was stern; his strength prodigious. He was religious after the fashion of the time, he heard mass daily, he founded churches and monasteries. He treated the clergy with respect; but

he steadily refused to do homage for his kingdom to pope Gregory VII. and he asserted his royal supremacy over the clergy of England. In domestic life he was an affectionate husband and a sufficiently indulgent father.

The passion of this monarch for the chase was, as the chronicler says, inordinate. Not content with the sixty-eight royal forests besides chases and parks in various parts, he laid waste a track of thirty square leagues in Hampshire, (burning villages, cottages and churches, and expelling the inhabitants,) to form the New Forest as it still is called. To preserve the game in these forests a particular code of laws most iniquitous and oppressive in their provisions was framed, and courts were instituted for carrying them into effect. No part of the royal despotism was so galling to the subjects of both races as these forest-laws, and they were a continued subject of complaint. From them are descended the modern game-laws; and the violators of them, the deer-stealers, were the predecessors of the modern poachers.

The great survey of the kingdom, contained in what is called the Domesday* book, was made in the latter part of the reign of the Conqueror. From it we learn the relative state of the landed property in his time and in that of the Confessor, and thus see how total the transfer had been from the hands of the English to those of the Normans.

A law of police which directed all fires to be put out at the tolling of a bell called the Curfew (*Couvre feu*) bell is by later chroniclers ascribed to William, but without any countenance from the early writers.

The Norman conquest as we have seen caused great individual suffering in England; but as evil, no more than

* Two derivations were given of this name; the one from *Dooms-day*, the last judgement, which it was said to resemble in its certainty and authority; the other from the *Domus Dei*, as the treasury in which it was kept at Winchester was named. This last seems to be the more probable origin.

good, is never unmixed in this world, we naturally are led to inquire what were its advantages. These seem to have been, a more efficient police ; in the days of the Conqueror, according to the chronicler, a girl laden with gold might have gone safely all over the kingdom ; security against invasions from Denmark, which were never renewed after his reign ; more extended intercourse with the continent, and thence a greater polish of manners, more magnificence in architecture, and greater learning in the clergy. We are however far from saying that all these combined (and some are only problematic benefits) at all compensated for the miseries inflicted by the conquest.

CHAPTER II.

WILLIAM II. (RUFUS.)*

1087—1100.

War with Robert of Normandy.—The Crusade.—Primate Anselm.—Death of William ;—his character.

WILLIAM's first care on arriving in England was to secure the fortresses of Dover, Hastings and Pevensey, and to get possession of the royal treasure at Winchester. Lanfranc, who had educated and knighted him, as was then the usage, was naturally disposed in his favour, and he crowned him at Westminster (Sept. 26) without hesitation. Robert, who was at Abbeville at the time of his father's death, took peaceable possession of his duchy, and the two brothers might have remained at unity, but for the restless bishop Odo and some of the leading Anglo-Norman nobles who possessed estates in both countries, and who felt it to be their interest that they should be under the one ruler. Deeming the easy indolent character of the duke more for their purpose, and perhaps regarding his right to all the dominions of his father to be clear, they declared in his favour, and retired to their castles until he should land with the army which at the instigation of Odo he was levying for the invasion of England.

William thus deserted by the Normans resolved to appeal to the English. He convened their leading men, and making them many fair promises, particularly of a relaxation of the forest-laws, engaged them to declare in his favour; and with an army of Englishmen he besieged and took the castles of Pevensey and Rochester, which were held by

* Authorities same as the last, excepting Pictaviensis and Gemmatensis.

bishop Odo and his brother the earl of Mortaigne. He granted their lives to his uncles and let them depart, but he confiscated their estates. He then detached the potent earl of Shrewsbury from the confederacy; and as his fleet, manned by English, prevented the arrival of succours from Normandy, he speedily reduced the other barons, some of whom he pardoned, but most he attainted, dividing their lands among those Normans who had remained faithful to him. As for his promises to the English he thought no longer on them, and the former oppression continued.

William at length (1091) felt himself strong enough to attempt the acquisition of Normandy, where the lax administration of Robert had caused much discontent. Having bribed the barons who held the fortresses of St. Vallery and Albemarle to put them into his hands, he embarked with a large force and landed in Normandy. Robert on his part assembled troops, and matters were likely to come to extremities, when the principal men on each side interfered and made them consent to an accommodation. Robert agreed to give his brother possession of Eu and of the towns of Albemarle, Feschamp and some others, on condition of his aiding him in the reduction of Maine, and restoring his partisans to their estates in England. It was further agreed that on the death of either brother without issue, the survivor should succeed to all his dominions. According to the usage of the time, when the nobles were so powerful and independent, twelve of the greatest barons on each side swore to exert themselves to have this treaty carried into effect.

As prince Henry, to whom Robert had sold the territory of the Cotentin for three thousand marks, was an object of suspicion and disquiet to both brothers, they joined their forces and besieged him in the fort of Mount St. Michael. Want of water had nearly obliged him to surrender, when Robert hearing of his distress gave him permission to supply himself, and even sent him wine for his table.

When reproached by William for this ill-timed generosity, the good-hearted duke replied, "What! should I let my own brother die of thirst? Where shall we find another when he is gone?" The king himself as he was riding one day alone to view the fortress was fallen on by two of Henry's men and unhorsed. One of them was preparing to slay him, when he cried out, "Hold, knave! I am the king of England." The soldier dropped his sword, and raised him with every mark of respect. The king gave him a reward, and took him into his service. Henry was soon forced to capitulate, and he continued for some years to wander about, oftentimes in great distress.

While the king was in Normandy, Malcolm of Scotland again made an incursion into England. William hastened home, led his troops against him, and made him renew his homage. Two years after (1093) Malcolm made another irruption into the north, but he was surprised and slain by a party of the troops of earl Mowbray, and confusion prevailed for some years in the royal house of Scotland. William meanwhile kept his eye on Normandy, where he instigated the refractory barons to rebellion. In 1094 he went over to their aid, having ordered a force of twenty thousand men to be levied in England, and marched to the coast as if to embark. But here the king's minister exacted ten shillings apiece from them, and dismissed them; and William employed the money so well that he was in a fair way to become master of the duchy when he was recalled by an irruption of the Welsh, which was succeeded (1095) by a conspiracy of Robert de Mowbray, Richard de Tunbridge, Roger de Lacy, and several other barons, to dethrone him and give the crown to his cousin Stephen count of Albemarle. But the king's celerity disconcerted them. Mowbray was taken and cast into prison, where he languished for thirty years, and the others were punished in various ways.

It was now the season when the eloquence of Peter the


Hermit and of the supreme pontiff was rousing the warriors of Europe to march in arms to Asia and free the sepulchre of Christ from the thralldom of the rude fanatic Turks who held the Holy City and insulted and abused the pious pilgrims of Christendom who resorted thither to perform their devotions. At the call of the Holy Father thousands and tens of thousands placed a cross on their right shoulder and pledged themselves to war against the enemies of Christ. Princes caught the infection equally with the inferior people; devotion inspired some, the love of adventure others, and there were those who pleased their imagination with the prospect of rich lordships and fair domains in the fertile regions of Asia*. Among the princes who assumed the cross, and than whom few were actuated by purer motives, was the gallant, generous, but impudent duke of Normandy. Being as usual without money, in order to obtain the means of appearing suitable to his rank, he agreed to transfer the duchy during the term of five years to the king of England, for the sum of ten thousand marks. William raised the money by extortion on all his subjects, the very convents being obliged to melt down their plate to supply him. Robert then (1096) set forth in gallant array with the martial pilgrims, and his brother took possession of his duchy.

After the death of Lanfranc in the year 1089, the king, urged by his profligate and rapacious minister Ralph, nicknamed Flambard (*Flambergh*), a Norman priest, held in his own hands the revenues of Canterbury and of such other sees as fell vacant, heedless of the remonstrances or complaints of the clergy: but a severe fit of illness (1093) having terrified him, he made many fair promises of amendment of life and rule, and consented to fill up the vacant sees. The person selected for the primacy was Anselm, a

* The details of these romantic expeditions will be found in a work by the previous author, named 'The Crusaders,' in 2 vols. sm. 8vo.

native of Piedmont, at that time abbot of Bec in Normandy, a man of great learning and piety. Anselm, it is said, fell on his knees, wept and implored the king not to require him to accept the dignity; and when this availed not, he clenched his right hand so fast that it was by main force that the pastoral staff was placed in it. But if Anselm was firm in refusing his high office he was equally firm in maintaining its rights against the crown. William on his recovery forgot all his good resolutions, and went on in his old course of tyranny and oppression; he sold spiritual dignities as before, and still held the revenues of the church, and among them a great part of those of Canterbury. This caused disputes between him and the primate; another source of disunion was the schism in the papacy, there being now two rival popes, Urban and Clement; and Anselm, who had already acknowledged the former, resolved to cause his authority to be recognised in England, while William, like his father, would have no pope acknowledged there whom he had not himself received. Both king and primate were resolute: the former at length summoned a synod to Rockingham in order to have Anselm deposed, but the bishops declaring themselves incompetent he gave up the attempt, and other motives afterwards having induced him to acknowledge Urban, the contest thus ended. But when (1097) the king was about to make an inroad into Wales and he called on the primate to furnish his proportion of troops as he was bound, Anselm sent them in such bad condition as to be quite useless; the king threatened to prosecute him: the primate pleaded poverty, and demanded the restoration of his revenues. At length not thinking himself safe in England he asked and obtained permission to return to the continent; he then repaired to Rome, where he was received with great respect by Urban as a sufferer in the cause of the church; the king meantime seized on all the revenues of his see.

After enduring great hardships and suffering a fearful



diminution of their numbers by famine, disease and the sword, the Crusaders at length (1099) saw themselves in possession of the tomb of their Lord. The news of their success stimulated those who had remained behind, and William duke of Guienne and earl of Poitiers assembled a large body of pilgrims to lead to the Holy Land. It would appear that he had proposed to mortgage, like the duke of Normandy, his dominions to the king of England, now the wealthiest monarch in Europe, for William spoke of spending his Christmas (1100) in Poitiers; but his end was now at hand. As he was at Winchester (Aug. 2), having had unpleasant dreams the night before, and being told of the visions of a certain monk, which, though he affected to despise them, made an impression on his mind, he gave up the thoughts he had had of hunting that day. But having eaten and drunk heartily at dinner his spirits revived, and he rode out into the New Forest; his attendants dispersed in quest of the game; in the evening some colliers passing through the forest found the king lying dead with an arrow stuck in his breast, and bleeding copiously; they laid the body on their cart and conveyed it to Winchester*.

It is doubtful how the king was slain; the common report was that a French knight, Walter Tyrrell, having shot at a stag, his arrow glanced from a tree and hit the king. Walter seeing the unintentional crime he had committed gave spurs to his horse, went to the coast, passed over to France, and joined a body of pilgrims for the Holy Land. But the abbot Suger assures us that Tyrrell had often after, when he had nothing to hope or fear from it, asserted on oath that he had not even seen the king that day in the forest. The fact of the king's death therefore alone is certain; the agent and the motive are alike unknown.

* The New Forest was fatal to the family of the Conqueror; it had already witnessed the death of his son Richard and his nephew William.

Such then was the end of the Red King in the twelfth year of his reign. As he had the misfortune to be on ill terms with the clergy, the dispensers of fame in those times, his character has been transmitted to us under the darkest colours. Making however all due allowances, we must still regard him as an odious rapacious tyrant, yet as a man very richly endowed by nature and capable of better things, had he been placed in circumstances more favourable to virtue.

CHAPTER III.

HENRY I. (BEAUCLERC.)*

1100—1135.

The king's marriage;—his contest with duke Robert.—Fate of Robert.—William Fitz-Robert.—Death of prince William;—of Fitz-Robert;—of the king.—Character of Henry.

PRINCE HENRY was also hunting in the New Forest when the death of his brother occurred. On learning that event he hastened to Winchester to secure the royal treasure. William de Breteuil who had charge of it also hastened thither and opposed him, alleging the right of his elder brother to the crown and treasure †; but Henry drew his sword and threatened to slay him, and so many took the prince's part that De Breteuil was forced to give way. Henry then proceeded without delay to London, and caused himself to be crowned, by the bishop of that see, on the third day after his brother's death (Aug. 5).

Aware that on the return of his elder brother he should have a struggle for his usurped crown, Henry resolved to secure if possible the affections of all classes of his subjects. He promised the clergy that he would not hold the temporalities of any vacant see; he engaged to his barons to mitigate all the feudal burdens; and he concluded his charter in these words, which applied to his English subjects particularly: "I restore to you the laws of king Edward with my father's amendments." He invited Anselm, who was now at Lyons, to return and resume his dignities, and on that prelate's arrival he engaged him to act in a matter of some delicacy. Henry, as a means of securing the affections of his English subjects, wished to espouse Matilda

* Authorities, same as before.

† See above, p. 106.

daughter of Malcolm king of Scotland and of Margaret "the good queen, king Edward's kinswoman, and of the right royal kin of England." But this lady, who was residing in the abbey of Rumsey, over which her aunt presided, had taken the veil though not the vows. A council of prelates and nobles was held at Lambeth, before which Matilda was examined by Anselm, and she declared that her only motive for assuming the veil had been to secure her honour from the brutal violence of the Norman nobles, against which the religious habit alone was a protection*. The council, aware that such had been a common practice with the English ladies since the conquest, pronounced her free to marry, and Anselm joined her forthwith in matrimony with the king, and anointed and crowned her queen, to the great joy of the English nation, who looked on this as a return to their ancient line of princes.

As he expected, Henry had soon to contend for his crown. Robert, who had acquired great fame in the East, had left the Holy Land soon after the conquest of Jerusalem. On his way home through Apulia, he became enamoured of Sibylla, the lovely, virtuous and prudent daughter of one of the Norman barons of that country. He sought and obtained her hand, and detained by her charms and those of the climate he lingered so long in Italy that he did not reach Normandy till his brother had been a month dead. He took possession of his duchy without opposition, and then made preparations for asserting his right to the English crown. Many of the principal Norman nobles, such as Robert de Belesme earl of Shrewsbury, William de Warrenne earl of Surrey, Arnulf de Montgomery, Robert de Pontefract, Ivo de Grentmesnil and others, sent inviting

* "I do not deny," said she, "that I have worn the veil; for when I was a child my aunt Christina put a black cloth on my head to preserve me from outrage; and when I used to throw it off, she would torment me both with harsh blows and indecent reproaches. Sighing and trembling, I have worn it in her presence, but as soon as I could get out of sight I always threw it on the ground and trampled it under my feet." Eadmer, p. 57.

him to come over, promising to join him with all their powers; for the same motives operated now as in the time of his contest with the late king, and moreover justice was clearly on his side; so much so, that the very seamen of the fleet which was assembled to oppose his landing, carried a large part of it over to him. Robert embarked his troops and landed at Portsmouth, and his partisans repaired to his standard. Henry, who was supported by the primate, to whom he paid the greatest court, and by several puissant barons, also assembled a large force and advanced to oppose the invader. The two armies lay opposite each other for some days, their leaders fearing the result of a conflict. Anselm and the leading men then mediated a peace, Robert resigning his claim on England for an annual pension of 3000 marks; each prince engaging to restore and pardon the adherents of the other; and each being to succeed to the dominions of the other in case of his dying without issue. Robert then departed, and Henry soon took occasion to prosecute the earl of Shrewsbury and his other supporters under various pretences, and when (1103) Robert ventured over to England to remonstrate against this breach of treaty he ran some hazard of losing his own liberty; he found it necessary to resign his pension, of which, to save appearances, he made a present to the queen, who was his god-daughter.

But nothing less than the possession of Normandy would content the ambition of Henry. Affecting to view a breach of treaty in the conduct of Robert, who had taken the outlaw Belesme into his service, he landed with an army in Normandy (1105). Several of the prelates and barons (probably secretly gained by him,) besought him to take the government on him. "Your brother," said they, "is not our governor; his people have no protection from his power. He dissipates all his wealth in follies, and often fasts till noon for want of bread; often he cannot leave his bed for want of clothes; when he is intoxicated

strumpets and buffoons strip him of his garments and boast of their robbery." This may all have been true, and Robert may also by his remissness have, as was added, suffered his barons to make war on each other and inflict great misery on the country; yet it is difficult to believe that pity for the afflicted people was the motive which actuated the king of England, who, when Robert declined his modest proposal of resigning the government to him, commenced military operations. The first campaign produced no event of importance; but in the second, in an engagement before the castle of Tenchebrai (Sept. 28), Robert was utterly defeated, and himself and some of his barons, four hundred knights and ten thousand men, were made captives after an immense slaughter of his troops. All Normandy then submitted to Henry.

The fate of Robert, the only Norman prince who has a claim on our sympathy, was a hard one. His captivity at first was light; but having attempted to make his escape, his eyes, it is said*, were put out by command of his unnatural brother, according to the barbarous practice of the age, and during a term of thirty years he was transferred from castle to castle, and he breathed his last in that of Cardiff in the eightieth year of his age. His lovely wife, whose prudence might have averted his misfortunes, had died some years before the battle of Tenchebrai; his only son William, a boy of five years of age, was taken at Falaise. When led before his uncle he sobbed and cried for mercy. Henry made a sudden effort as if to rid himself of evil thoughts and directed him to be removed. He was committed to the care of a baron named Helie de St. Saen,

* Westminster, Paris, Wikes. Malmsbury, who was a contemporary, says, "to the day of his death he was held in free custody by the laudable affection of his brother, suffering no evil but solitude, if that can be called solitude where there was great attention on the part of his keepers and no want of amusements or of dainties." This writer however was the panegyrist of Henry. The king himself in 1119 assured the pope that his brother was living in splendour and had every amusement that he desired.

who had married Robert's natural daughter, by whom he was carefully nurtured.

Among the captives at Tenchebrai was Edgar Atheling, whom some slight similarity of character had attached to Robert's fortune. He was personally brave, but so mean were his talents, that Henry, like his father, could venture to assume the appearance of magnanimity toward him. He gave him his liberty and a small pension; and the last male of the line of Cerdic thus vanishes from history.


Henry soon began to repent of his liberality toward his nephew, and he sent (1108) a trusty messenger to the castle of Helie de St. Saen to get possession of him. Helie was absent at the time, but his servants conveyed away the sleeping child and placed him in safety, and Helie on his return abandoned his property and went with his helpless charge from court to court. When William grew up and displayed talents and virtues worthy of his race he interested various princes in his favour. Louis le Gros king of France, the feudal superior of Normandy, a brave and generous prince, aware of the danger of letting the king of England become too powerful, joined with the counts of Anjou and Flanders in supporting the cause of William, and a petty, indecisive war was kept up for some years. Henry detached the count of Anjou from the confederacy by contracting his eldest son to the count's daughter, and the death of the count of Flanders, who was slain in a skirmish near Eu, further weakened the cause of young William. King Louis tried to engage the church in his favour by taking him to a council at Rheims (1119), over which pope Calixtus II. personally presided; but the arts and the gifts of Henry easily overcame the just claims of his nephew, and shortly after a peace was concluded between him and the king of France.

But fortune soon offered another chance to young William. King Henry, when his eldest son, also named William, had attained his eighteenth year, took him over to

Normandy (1120) to have him recognised as his successor. On their return from the port of Barfleur the king's ship having a fair wind was soon out of sight, but that of the prince having been detained by an accident, the sailors and their captain Thomas Fitz-Stephen got drunk, and when they set sail they ran the ship on a rock, where she foundered. The prince had gotten into the boat and was now clear of the vessel and out of danger, when he heard the cries of the countess of Perche his natural sister. He made the seamen put back to save her, but when the boat approached the ship, such numbers crowded into it that it went down and all perished. About a hundred and forty young noblemen were lost on this occasion; the only person who escaped was a butcher of Rouen, who clung to the mast. Fitz-Stephen also grasped it, but on being informed that the prince was lost he said he would not survive, and let go his hold. The king when assured of the calamity fainted away and never regained his cheerfulness.

The death of this prince was a misfortune to England, inasmuch as it gave occasion to the civil wars which ensued; but had he survived he would probably have been as great a tyrant as any of his race, for he often declared that if ever he came to govern England he would yoke the Saxons to the plough like oxen. Queen Matilda had died two years before her son (1118).

As the prince had left no issue, the king, who had no legitimate son remaining, resolved to marry again. His choice fell on Adelais or Alice daughter of the duke of Louvain and niece of pope Calixtus (1121). But Adelais brought him no children, and young William his nephew having again gained the count of Anjou to his side was able to keep Normandy in a state of disturbance for some years. Henry, however, again (1127) detached the earl of Anjou by a marriage. His only remaining legitimate child, a daughter named Matilda or Maud, had been married to the emperor Henry V. She was now a widow, and he



offered her hand to Geoffrey the count's eldest son. The marriage took place though contrary to the inclination of the empress, who regarded it as a degradation, and opposed by several of the barons of England and Normandy; and Matilda was recognised as heiress of all her father's dominions. The king of France still continued his support of William Fitz-Robert; and when Henry by his influence with the church, had succeeded in having that prince divorced from the daughter of the count of Anjou on the plea of consanguinity, Louis gave him (1124) in marriage his queen's sister, and on the death of the earl of Flanders, who was assassinated (1127) when at church, he invested him with that county. But William, doomed to be the sport of fortune, did not long enjoy his dignity. In consequence of his having taken severe vengeance on the murderers of his predecessor, a plot was laid by their friends and relatives to assassinate him when retiring from the apartments of his mistress late in the night. This lady, who was privy to the design, could not refrain from letting tears drop on his head while bathing it according to the fashion of those times. William's suspicions were awakened; he pressed her, and she told him the whole truth. He thus escaped this danger, but he shortly afterwards (1128) died of a wound received in battle at Alost against the count of Alsatia.

Henry was now free from uneasiness; his daughter the empress was delivered of a son and heir (1132), and two more sons born to her seemed to render the succession secure. He made the nobility renew their oath of fealty to her and her eldest son in a council held at Oxford. He spent the latter years of his reign chiefly in Normandy to be near the empress, for whom he had a strong affection. An incursion of the Welsh having taken place (1135) he was preparing to return to England, when having eaten too heartily of lampreys, a food he was often cautioned against, he got a surfeit, and died (Dec. 1) in the sixty-

seventh year of his age: his body was brought over to England and interred at Reading.

Henry I. was a monarch of superior ability; the Conqueror alone of his family equalled him in talent. He showed great spirit in his dealings with the church; he caused justice to be rigidly executed. "A good man was he, and mickle dread was there of him," says the Saxon Chronicle. "Peace made he for man and beast; whoso bare his burthen of gold and silver no man durst say to him aught but good." But he set at nought his charters and his promises, and he taxed his people without mercy; he increased the rigour of the forest laws, and enlarged the forests; he punished him who killed a stag as him who murdered a man; he made all the dogs near the forests be mutilated, men were even in some cases prohibited from hunting on their own lands, a great grievance in those days*. Henry was more addicted to literature than was usual among princes and nobles at that time, whence he obtained the appellation of Beauclerc, or Fine-scholar. His treatment of his brother and nephew violated all the principles of nature and justice; but when there is uncontrolled power, and a kingdom is the prize, these principles have been set at nought in all ages of the world.

In the year 1109 Henry, as a check on the turbulent Welsh, settled at Haverford-west in Pembrokeshire a colony of Flemings. These men, who had been driven from their own country by an inundation of the Rhine, applied themselves to the culture of the soil and to the manufacture of cloth, and they were always able to repel the efforts of the Welsh to dislodge them.

* Malmsbury praises the temperance and continence of Henry; yet he died of a surfeit, and we hear of seven sons and eight daughters his natural children.

CHAPTER IV.

STEPHEN.*

1135—1154.

Usurpation of Stephen. — Miseries endured by the people. — War between Stephen and the empress ;—between Stephen and young Henry.—Death of Stephen.

IN a regularly ordered state, the succession of Matilda would have followed as a matter of course, as no one else had even the shadow of a claim to the crown ; but Henry himself had by his usurpation shown how a crown might be acquired without right, and there was one, whom perhaps he little suspected, ready to tread in his footsteps.

Adela daughter of the Conqueror had been married to the count of Blois, to whom she bore a numerous offspring ; two of her sons had been invited over to England by king Henry, and he made one of them, Henry, who was in holy orders, abbot of Glastonbury, and afterwards bishop of Winchester ; for Stephen, the other, he obtained in marriage the daughter and heiress of the count of Boulogne, who had also large estates in England ; he moreover conferred on him extensive domains in both England and Normandy. Stephen always affected great gratitude toward his uncle, and he had been forward in taking the oath of fealty to the empress in 1131†. By his valour, liberality, and affable manners he had gained great favour

* Authorities, same as before, with the *Gesta Stephani*, *Contin. Flor.* and *Gervasius*.


† On that occasion the king of Scots first took the oath of fealty in virtue of his rank ; Stephen and Robert of Gloucester, the king's natural son, contended for the second place. It may be as Dr. Lingard says, that they had both designs on the throne, but the subsequent conduct of Robert contradicts this supposition.

with both barons and people in England, and the citizens of London were especially devoted to him.

On the death of his uncle, Stephen resolved to make a bold effort for the crown; he passed over to England, and hastened to London, where he was received with acclamations by the populace. His brother and the bishop of Salisbury endeavoured to prevail on the primate to crown him; and to overcome that prelate's scruples they produced Hugh Bigod, a servant of the late king, who made oath that when on his death-bed he had declared his intention of making the count of Boulogne his heir. The primate was, or affected to be, convinced, and he performed the ceremony of the coronation at Westminster (Dec. 22).

Stephen, imitating his predecessor, issued a charter exactly similar to his, with probably as little intention of observing it; he had further, still following his uncle's example, lost no time in getting possession of the royal treasure of 100,000*l.* which lay at Winchester, and with this money he took into his pay a large body of mercenary soldiers from the continent, and procured a recognition of his title at Rome.

The Norman barons, moved by hereditary animosity to the Angevins, and also by the motives which had always made them desire the union of their duchy with England, readily submitted to Stephen; and the king of France, Louis the Young, received the homage of his son Eustace for that province, and gave him his own sister in marriage. Geoffrey of Anjou was obliged to make a truce for two years with Stephen, on condition of being paid 5000 marks a year during that period. Robert earl of Gloucester, the natural brother of the empress, to whom he was much attached, was the person whom Stephen had most to dread. This nobleman would do him homage only on conditions which would give him a pretext for revolt whenever he pleased, and the king was obliged to consent. The clergy




made similar reservations in their oaths; the barons extorted the right of fortifying their castles, and soon fortresses rose on all sides, filled with a brutal and ferocious soldiery. A contest for the crown commenced ere long between Stephen and Matilda, and the miseries which ensued are thus vividly described by one who witnessed them.

“In this king’s time,” says the contemporary Saxon Chronicle, “was all dissention and evil and rapine; for against him soon arose the rich (*i. e.* great) men that were traitors; when they found that he was a mild man, and soft and good, and did no justice [execution], then did they do all wonders. They had done him homage and sworn oaths, but they held no truth; they were all forsworn and heeded not their troth; for every rich man built his castles, and they held them against him, and they filled the land full of castles. They sorely oppressed the wretched men of the land with castle-works, and when the castles were made they filled them with devils and evil men; then took they the men that they weened had any goods, both by night and by day, peasant men and women, and put them in prison for their gold and silver, and tortured them with tortures not to be told, for never were any martyrs so tortured as they were; some they hung up by the feet and smoked them with foul smoke; some they hung by the thumbs or by the head, and hung coats of mail at their feet; to some they put knotted strings round their head and twisted them till it went to the brains; they put them into dungeons where there were adders, and snakes, and toads, and killed them so; some they put in the crucet-house, that is in a chest that was short and narrow and not deep, and put sharp stones in it, and forced the man in, and so broke all his limbs. In many of the castles were things loathly and grim that were called *Sachenteges* [*culprits’ halters*], of which two or three men had enough to do to carry one that was so made, that is

fastened to a beam, and they put a sharp iron about the man's throat and neck that he might on no side sit or lie, or sleep, but bear all that iron. Many thousands did they kill with hunger. I cannot and may not tell all the wounds and all the pains that they gave to wretched men in this land, and that lasted for the nineteen winters that Stephen was king, and still it was worse and worse. They laid guilds [taxes] evermore on the towns, and called it *ten-sezie*; when the wretched men had no more to give they robbed and burned all the towns, that well thou mightest go a whole day's journey and shouldest never find a man sitting [dwelling] in a town or land tilled. Then was corn dear, and flesh, and cheese, and butter, for there was none in the land. Wretched men died of hunger; some took to alms who were one time rich men; some fled out of the land; never yet was more wretchedness in the land, and never did heathen men worse than they did; for after a time they spared neither church nor church-yard*, but took all the goods that were therein, and then burned church and all together; neither did they spare bishop's land nor abbot's, nor priest's, but robbed monks and clerks, and every man who was able another; if two or three men came riding to a town all the township fled before them, weening that they were robbers. The bishops and learned men cursed them evermore, but nought thereof came on them, for they were all accursed and forsworn and abandoned. It was the sea men tilled; the earth bare no corn, for the land was all destroyed with such deeds, and they said openly that Christ slept and his saints. Such and more than we can say we tholed nineteen winters for our sins."

After this faithful picture, drawn by the hand of one who described what he beheld, of the horrors of feudalism and the misery caused by the usurpation of Stephen, it

* The church-yard being consecrated partook of the sanctity of the church, and people used to place their goods in it for security.



seems hardly necessary to go into details ; we will however narrate succinctly the principal events of the contest for the crown.

In the first year of Stephen's reign (1136) the earl of Exeter took arms against him, and David king of Scotland invaded England in the cause of his niece the empress ; but the earl was forced to submit, and the Scottish king agreed to an accommodation. In 1138 David again invaded England ; the ravages committed by his wild ferocious followers are described as exceeding the usual limits of atrocity, and the earl of Albemarle and the other barons of those parts, animated by Thurstan, the venerable archbishop of York, lost no time in collecting their troops to oppose them. The armies encountered at Northallerton (Aug. 22), and in the battle called that of the Standard from a large crucifix on a wain used by the English as a standard, the Scots were totally defeated.

Earl Robert having matured his plans in favour of his sister, pretended that Stephen had violated the conditions made with him, renounced his allegiance, and withdrew to the continent (1139). As Stephen had now embroiled himself also with the church, by forcing the bishops of Salisbury and Lincoln to deliver up the castles they had erected, Robert advised the empress to appear in England to head her party. She landed (Sept. 30) with him and one hundred and forty knights in Sussex, was received by the queen dowager Adelais in her castle of Arundel, and thence proceeded to her brother's castle of Bristol. Geoffrey Talbot, William Mohun, Ralph Lovel, and several other barons declared for her, and her cause gradually gained ground ; battles and skirmishes occurred in various parts all through the following year ; at length (Feb. 2, 1141) Stephen and earl Robert came to an engagement near Lincoln, and the king was defeated and led a captive to Gloucester, where he was treated with great rigour. The barons of Stephen's party all submitted ; the bishop of

Winchester, who was invested with legatine authority, and had been on ill terms with his brother on account of the affair of the two bishops, was now induced to come to an agreement with Matilda; to gain the clergy more effectually she consented to receive the crown from their hands, and in a synod summoned by the legate, at which the deputies of the Londoners* were the only laymen present, she was proclaimed queen of England. Her authority was generally acknowledged, but tranquillity did not long remain; besides the disadvantage of her sex, she was of a haughty imperious temper, she rejected in the most ungracious manner the petition of Stephen's queen and several of the nobility for his release, though they engaged that he should renounce the crown; that of the legate, that his nephew Eustace might be allowed to retain his patrimonial estates; and that of the Londoners, for the laws of king Edward.

The Londoners were grievously offended, and the legate, who had probably never been sincere in the cause of Matilda, fanning their wrath, they conspired to seize her; she fled to Oxford, and thence hastened to Winchester, with the intention of seizing the legate; but she was there herself besieged by the Londoners, Stephen's mercenaries, and the legate's vassals; being hard pressed, she was obliged to attempt an escape, which she effected with difficulty, but her brother Robert was taken prisoner, and he was of so much importance to the cause that her party were glad to give Stephen in exchange for him. The war was now renewed, and was carried on for some years with various success. In the severe winter of 1142 the empress was closely besieged by Stephen in the castle of Oxford. When her stock of provisions was exhausted she dressed herself and three knights in white, as the ground was covered with snow; a sentinel who had been bribed con-

* Fitzstephen, the biographer of Becket, says that in this reign the citizens of London were 20,000 horse and 60,000 foot. This supposes a population of upwards of 300,000, which is utterly incredible. The population is computed by modern writers at less than 50,000.


ducted them through the enemy's posts; they crossed the Thames on the ice, proceeded to Abingdon on foot, and thence having procured horses rode to Wallingford. This escape was a matter of astonishment to her enemies, while her friends viewed it as little less than miraculous.

At length (1146) the death of her brother Robert and of some of her other friends convinced the empress of the uncertainty of the event, and she withdrew to Normandy (1147) to watch the progress of affairs. Her departure however brought little tranquillity to Stephen, for he soon alienated many of his partisans by requiring the surrender of their castles; the legatine power also had been transferred by the new pope Eugenius to the primate Theobald, the enemy of the late legate; and moreover, the pope, as Stephen resisted one of his encroachments, had laid his party under an interdict.

There was however a cessation of hostilities for two years after the departure of the empress. In 1150 her son Henry, who had now reached his sixteenth year, being desirous of receiving knighthood from the king of Scotland, passed through England with a large retinue, and raised the hopes of his partisans. On his return (1151) after having spent some time in the Scottish court his mother resigned Normandy to him, and on the death of his father he inherited Anjou. The following year (1152) he greatly increased his power by a marriage with Eleanor of Guienne and Poitou. This princess had been married to the French king Louis the Young; she was the companion of his crusade to the Holy Land (1148), and her conduct in the East had been so reprehensible that Louis on his return, yielding to the suggestions of delicacy rather than of prudence, had divorced her. The young count of Anjou less fastidious immediately paid his addresses to her, and espoused her within six weeks after the divorce; and his dominions now extended from the confines of Flanders to the Pyrenees, while his superior lord Louis did not rule over more than a tenth of France. Louis incensed

at this conduct of the count of Anjou aided Stephen's son Eustace to overrun Normandy; but Henry speedily drove them out of it, and then, as Stephen was now besieging Wallingford, which was held by his partisans, he passed over to their aid. To draw Stephen away he laid siege to Malmsbury, and having taken that town marched to the relief of Wallingford. The two armies lay in sight of each other, divided by the river Thames. Meantime the prelates and nobles on each side weary of civil discord proposed an accommodation, the earl of Arundel boldly saying "that it was not reasonable to prolong the calamities of a whole kingdom on account of the ambition of two princes;" and Henry and Stephen having conversed across a narrow part of the river agreed to a truce for that purpose. Stephen's son Eustace, a turbulent youth, abused his father openly for concluding this truce, and withdrawing from the camp with his followers, began to ravage Cambridge-shire: he fixed his abode at the stately abbey of Bury St. Edmund's, but he took a fever as he sat at a banquet there and died. This obstacle being removed, a council was held at Winchester (Nov. 1153), in which it was agreed that Stephen should retain the crown of England for his life, on condition of his adopting Henry, who was to be his successor; that Stephen's son William should inherit all his father had possessed before he usurped the crown; that the adherents on both sides should sustain no injury; that all grants of the crown lands made by Stephen should be revoked, and all castles built by his permission be demolished.

These terms being sworn to, Henry returned to Normandy. Stephen did not long retain his dignity; he died the following year (Oct. 25) after a boisterous and unquiet reign of nineteen years. He was a prince possessed of many noble and estimable qualities, and would have probably made an excellent king if he had acquired his crown in a legal manner.



CHAPTER V.

ANGLO-NORMAN CONSTITUTION.

Effects of the Conquest.—Feudal System.—State of the church.—Courts of law.—Taxes.

HAVING thus brought the Anglo-Norman period of our history to its close, we will make a few remarks on the condition of the nation at this time.

An erroneous opinion has long prevailed, that the Norman conquest swept, like a moral deluge, over the country, carrying away its ancient and venerable institutions, and leaving in their place such as had been hitherto unknown in England. We are told that the Conqueror had even formed a plan for fixing on the English nation the ultimate badge of conquest by abolishing their native dialect, and forcing them to assume that of their masters, for which purpose he ordered that the French language should be taught in all the schools, be employed in pleadings in the high court of justice (*Curia Regis*), and be used in laws and charters. The whole of this theory, however, rests only on authority of the most dubious character*; the Conqueror and his son Henry I. re-enacted, as we have seen, the laws of the Confessor; the English language (never the French) was employed by them in their charters, and though the latter was probably much used in the *Curia Regis*, the members of which were mostly Normans, it was a matter of convenience rather than obligation. Finally, the county and other courts continued in use little altered.

The great changes introduced by the Norman conquest were the almost total transfer of landed property; the

* Namely, that of Ingulf. See Palgrave.

change of the hierarchy in the church ; the development of the feudal system ; the separation of the ecclesiastical from the civil jurisdiction. Of these the first two have been already sufficiently noticed, we will therefore proceed to explain the last two.

The more inquiry into the Middle Ages advances, the more we recognise the influence of Rome, and the imitative habits of the tribes which overturned her empire. It was long the fashion to regard the feudal system as an original regular plan formed by the Barbarians for the preservation of the conquests they had made ; more accurate inquiries make it probable that the system in its main points lay ready to their hands.

The colonists of ancient Rome were bound to military service when called on by the state, and in the latter days of the Republic they were soldiers alone who thus were rewarded by their victorious general. The emperor Alexander Severus extended this system as the means of defending the frontiers of the empire. Lands were given to those who were named the Limitanean and Ripuarian soldiery,—from their location on the marches (*limites*), and on the banks (*ripæ*) of the great frontier-rivers,—and their heirs, without a power of alienation, on the express condition of military service. At a subsequent period lands denominated *Lætici** were given in the interior of the provinces to large bodies of the Barbarians on similar conditions. We thus find the system of the tenure of land by military service completely formed ; and the other great characteristic of the feudal system, the personal relation of Lord and Vassal, may, perhaps, be as safely deduced from that of Patron and Client at Rome (its similarity to which has often been observed) as from the antecedent usages of the Celtic or German tribes.

All the elements of feudalism prevailed among the

* From the Germanic *Leod*, *leute*, people.

Anglo-Saxons, but the peculiar circumstances in which the Normans were placed caused it to attain a more perfect form, and the ingenuity of Norman lawyers drew such consequences from it as made it a system of absolute slavery.

In the feudal system of England the king was regarded as the original proprietor of all the lands in the kingdom ; those who held them were his vassals, and were obliged to swear *fidelity*, that is, fidelity, to him, and do him *homage*, or become his *men*. The vassal who thus held by military service was bound to serve his lord in war, and to attend or do suit to his court in peace, in order to answer for any offences he might have himself committed, and to assist in the trial of others.

The lands of England were divided by the Conqueror into about sixty-thousand feuds, fiefs, or knights' fees : he who held an entire fee was bound in time of war to serve for forty days at his own expense ; he who had half a one for twenty, and so on ; the lord who held several fees, furnished men in proportion. A vassal of the crown, or tenant *in capite*, or *in chief*, as he was called, might sub-enfeudate his lands, and have vassals bound to himself as he was to his superior lord ; but these were also regarded as vassals of the crown, and bound by allegiance.

The incidents of the Anglo-Norman feudalism were as follows :

Aids.—These were sums of money paid to ransom the lord if made a prisoner ; to supply the means of making his eldest son a knight, a ceremony attended with no little expense ; to portion his eldest daughter.

Reliefs.—The relief was a composition paid by the heir for permission to enter on the fief which had lapsed to the superior lord by the death of the last possessor.

Primer Seisin.—This was an increased relief paid to the king by the heir of a tenant in chief if of full age ; it usually consisted of a year's profit of the lands.

Wardship.—If at the death of a tenant his heir was under the age of twenty-one, or his heiress under that of fourteen, the lord became guardian in chivalry, and he had the custody of the person and lands (without being accountable for the profits,) till the former attained the age of twenty-one, the latter of fourteen years. The heir *in capite*, on coming of age, was bound to take knighthood or pay a fine to the king.

Marriage.—During the minority the lord had the power of disposing of his ward in matrimony provided the match was not one of disparagement, and if he or she refused it, they forfeited the value of the marriage, that is, the sum that any one would have given for it to the guardian. If the male ward married without the consent of his guardian, he forfeited double the value of the marriage.

If a tenant in chief transferred his land, a fine for alienation was due to the king. If he died without heirs of his blood, or was attainted for treason or felony, the land reverted to the lord.

Such were the main features of feudalism in England, and when we consider the wardships and marriages (both peculiar to English feudalism), and the arbitrary nature of reliefs and aids, we may fairly look upon it as a system of slavery and oppression*.

We are now to consider the condition of the church at this time, for which purpose we must sketch the vast project of sacerdotal dominion formed by the aspiring mind of Pope Gregory VII.

In consequence chiefly of the imbecile superstition of the kings of France, the episcopal order had made great advances toward the acquisition of a power similar to that of the ancient Druids. From the earliest times, in consequence of the rank of the city over which he presided, a

* The principle of the relief was certainly less unjust than that of the modern legacy-duty.

kind of supremacy had been generally conceded to the bishop of Rome, and this notion of his superiority gradually extended through the discontent of prelates, who appealed to him against their metropolitans, and he thus was imperceptibly drawing to himself the power acquired by the episcopal order. In the latter part of the eighth century, a work, purporting to be a collection of decrees of former pontiffs, appeared under the name of one Isidore. This forgery (as it has been long known to be) was calculated to extend the papal authority and diminish that of the metropolitans, by enjoining appeals to Rome and forbidding to hold national councils without the permission of the pontiff. The bishops gladly acquiesced in them, and the papal power rapidly advanced; its strength was also increased by the more rigorous imposition of celibacy on the clergy, and by the spreading of the rule of St. Benedict, points on which we have already touched.

Such was the state of the papacy when the celebrated Hildebrand became its animating spirit. His daring mind conceived the project not merely of freeing the church from all subordination to the temporal power, but of making it supreme over it. The subject of investitures, or the conferring of spiritual dignities by lay princes, was that with which he opened the contest when, under the name of Gregory VII., he ascended the papal throne. From the earliest times bishops had been elected by the clergy and people; the form still continued, but princes easily managed to have the real appointment; and in England we have seen the direct nomination by the crown. Gross simony of course prevailed, for what was valuable would be naturally the subject of bargain and sale, and the temporalities attached to the spiritual dignities were in most places considerable. These temporalities, mostly the grants of former kings, were regarded in the light of fiefs. The new bishop therefore was required to swear fealty, and to do homage to the lord who invested him by the de-

livery of a ring and crosier. Gregory issued a decree against this practice; and thus commenced a contest with the emperor Henry IV., which lasted throughout their lives, and was kept up by their successors for nearly half a century. It was terminated by a compromise with the emperor Henry V., the monarch recognising the freedom of elections, and resigning the right of conferring the spiritual dignity (by the ring and crosier), but retaining that of delivering the temporalities by the sceptre. A similar arrangement was made with Henry I. of England, who had vigorously contested this point with the papacy and its uncompromising advocate archbishop Anselm. Each party thus gave up something; the real gain seems to have been on the side of the crown*.

In the disputes on this subject we discern the influence of the doctrine of transubstantiation, which, ignorant and superstitious as the preceding ages had been, was not yet established by the pontifical authority. At the council of Bari (1096) it was declared to be abominable that pure hands which could create God, and offer him up in sacrifice for the sins of the world, should (in the act of homage) be placed between hands polluted with rapine and bloodshed, and defiled by contact with the other sex. The abomination, however, was suffered to remain.

To extend the papal power over the prelacy, it was decreed that no bishop should exercise his function till he had been confirmed by the Holy See. Bishops were cited to Rome on the most frivolous pretexts; archbishops were obliged by Gregory to go thither in person to receive their consecrated *pallium*. A further hardship was the constant sending of special ministers, legates *à latere*. Hitherto a metropolitan of the country (in England the archbishop of

* This contest affords a proof that the popes and clergy were often actuated by a sense of justice and duty in the apparently most dubious cases. Paschal II. actually signed an agreement with Henry V., by which the prelates were to resign all the lands, &c. they held in fief of the emperor, provided he gave up the right of investiture.

Canterbury,) had held a perpetual legatine authority as the pope's lieutenant or representative, but now special legates were continually coming, who assumed high authority, held councils, deposed bishops, framed canons, and at the same time lived in great splendour at the expense of the prelates, whose pride was galled by the circumstance of the legate often being but a simple deacon.

To maintain their power the popes had two most efficacious weapons, excommunication and interdict. The first had been originally nothing more than the power which every society has of expelling its own unruly members; but the church had gradually managed to invest it with terrors, and use it as a weapon of offence and vengeance. The excommunicate were cursed with a fiendish minuteness of detail in soul and body, limbs and joints, in their goings-out and comings-in, in all times and all places*; they were cut off from society like the leprous; any communication with them became morally infectious: when they died the rites of sepulture were denied them. This sentence, however, only affected those who brought it on themselves by opposition to the church; interdict fell often on the innocent. When a prince or noble had offended the church, and the milder sentence did not prove efficacious, his dominions were laid under interdict, that is, religious offices were *interdicted* in them. No service was performed in the churches; no bells were tolled; no sacraments administered, save the first and the last, baptism and extreme unction; the dead were buried in silence; a moral gloom overspread the land. It was Gregory that first employed these spiritual weapons with advantage. In the plenitude of his power he dared to excommunicate the emperor Henry, and even to issue against him a sentence of deposition from the throne, releasing thereby his subjects from their allegiance.

* See Southey, *Book of the Church*, i. 190, 191. The entire form may be seen in Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*.


In England the usurpations of the church were greatly forwarded by the separation, in the time of the Conqueror, of the ecclesiastical from the civil jurisdiction. The clergy claimed now a total exemption from trial before lay-tribunals, however great their crimes might be ; and as the church inflicted no higher penalty than stripes, sacerdotal murderers and robbers (of whom the number was not trifling) thus escaped the punishment justly due to their crimes. The struggle between the crown and church on this head is soon to occupy our attention.

The county and other courts of the Saxon times, as we have seen, remained unaffected by the Conquest. The paramount tribunal was the King's Court (*Curia Regis*), which attended the person of the monarch. It was composed of the justiciary*, the chancellor, treasurer, constable, and the other great officers, with any other barons who chose to attend, or whom the king might appoint. This court served to collect and manage the revenue, and to despatch public business. It also decided private suits when brought before it. As in order to do so it was requisite to pay a fine to the king, the royal court became a source of revenue, and the justice of the Anglo-Norman monarchs was also scandalously venal.

The Saxon ordeals also still remained in use ; to these was now added a third kind, that of the duel or wager of battle. The cause of these apparently absurd modes of eliciting justice seems to have been the disregard to truth and proneness to perjury so prevalent in those times, and perhaps the want of skill in cross-examining witnesses.

The revenues of the crown under the Anglo-Norman monarchs were enormous. We are told by a contemporary

* This office was unknown to the Anglo-Saxon times. It originated in the necessity of the king's absence from the realm. The justiciary at such times acted as regent. He always presided in the King's Court.



(but the account is utterly incredible) that those of the Conqueror amounted to 1060*l.* a day*. They arose, 1. from the immense demesnes which the king possessed in almost every county in England, and which were let at the highest rates; the rents were mostly paid in kind. 2. The king claimed the right of imposing at pleasure taxes named *tallages*† on the inhabitants of the royal demesnes. He also levied tolls on the bridges, and at the fairs and markets, and customs on the import and export of goods at the sea-ports; thus from a vessel whose cargo was wine the royal officers demanded one hogshead from before, and another from behind the mast‡. 3. The fines and mulcts paid in the royal courts contributed largely to swell the annual amount of the revenue. 4. Escheats and forfeitures (the natural consequences of such a turbulent, restless state of society) were continually occurring, and the lands thus acquired usually went to augment the royal demesnes, or were granted away for pecuniary considerations. 5. The reliefs, wardships, and marriages of his vassals were to the king a source of income, as he generally sold his rights of wardship and marriage to the best bidders.

The following examples will illustrate what has been stated. They occurred it is true under the Plantagenets, but the system was the same under both lines, and *they* were certainly not more rapacious than the Conqueror and his sons§.

Simon de Montfort paid Henry III. 10,000 marks for the wardship of Gilbert de Umfréville, and Geoffrey de Mandeville gave him 20,000 marks that he might marry Isabel countess of Gloucester. The county of Norfolk paid money that they might be fairly dealt with, and the

* That is, pounds' weight of silver.


† That is, *cuttings*: our modern word *excise* is of similar signification.

‡ We shall meet this import frequently under the name of *tonnage* and *poundage*, the former being the duty on wine, the latter that on dry goods.

§ These instances, with many more, will be found in Hume's Second Appendix, selected from Madox's History of the Exchequer.

town of Yarmouth that the charters granted them might not be violated. One man paid for permission to defend himself in case he were accused of a certain homicide ; another to have an inquest to inquire whether those who accused him of robbery and theft did it out of envy and ill-will or not. Permission to trade was also matter of sale and purchase. Hugh Oisel paid 400 marks for liberty to trade in England, and the men of Worcester 100 shillings to have the liberty of buying and selling dyed cloth as heretofore. The monarch's favour and displeasure were also venal. To obtain the favour of Henry II. one person paid nearly 1000*l.*, and another 1000 marks for the remission of his anger. In like manner the king's good offices were to be had for money or money's worth. Richard de Neville gave twenty palfreys in order that the king might request Isolda Bisset to marry him, and Roger Fitz-Walter gave five for the king's letter to Roger Bertram's mother for the same purpose. On the other hand, Robert de Veaux gave five to the king (John) to hold his tongue about Henry Pinel's wife, and the same king made the bishop of Winchester pay him a tun of wine for not having reminded him to give a girdle to the countess of Albemarle.

6. A sixth source of the royal revenue was the Jewry, or the body of the Jews residing in England. Of this extraordinary race, individuals had settled here in the Anglo-Saxon times, but their complete establishment took place after the Conquest. Their chief occupation was lending money, for which they exacted enormous interest. They were regarded as the king's property and could only dwell in the royal boroughs, where they had a peculiar quarter with a synagogue and a cemetery without the walls. In return for his protection the king tallaged them at will, laid on them a capitation-tax, had fines, forfeitures, and reliefs; he even used, when adequately bribed, to forgive the money owed to Jews by their debtors.



The military force of the kingdom consisted chiefly of the holders of knights' fees. These and their esquires and followers served on horseback, clad in iron-mail and armed with swords, lances, battle-axes, or maces. They were termed the Men-at-arms*. The king levied infantry at will from among the inferior classes of the people. The service of a feudal army being limited to a period of forty days, it was nearly useless in the case of war in France. A practice was therefore commenced in the reign of Henry I. of commuting for personal service, by paying a certain sum of money for each knight's fee. This tax, which was named *Escuage* or *Scutage*, became fully established under the Plantagenets, and with the produce of it and other taxes the kings used to take into pay bodies of those mercenary soldiers who were so numerous in France and Flanders, on account of the constant state of public and private warfare which prevailed in those times.

* Our forefathers rendered the French *à, with or for*, by their own *at*. Thus we still say *secretary-at-war*.

HOUSE OF PLANTAGENET.

CHAPTER I.

HENRY II. (PLANTAGENET).*

1154—1189.


Dominions of Henry.—War of Toulouse.—History of Thomas à Becket;—contest between him and the king.—Murder of Becket.—Invasion of Ireland.—Wars between Henry and his sons.—Death and character of the king.—Changes in the law of England.

ON the death of Stephen, the English nation, weary of civil contention, cheerfully acquiesced in the accession of Henry Plantagenet†. The new monarch, now only in his twenty-first year, exceeded all the princes of his time in extent of dominion. In right of his mother he ruled England, Normandy, and Maine; from his father he inherited Anjou and Touraine; while his union with Eleanor gave him the provinces thence to the Pyrenees, with Perigord, Limousin, and Auvergne. He thus possessed a third of France; a vassal far more powerful than the monarch to whom he owed his homage.

After a delay of six weeks, chiefly caused by inclement weather, Henry landed in England (Dec. 3), and shortly after (19th) he and his queen were crowned at Winchester with unwonted magnificence. His first care after the festivities were over was to reform the abuses which had

* Authorities :—Paris, Westminster, Bromton, Hoveden, Knighton, Newbury, Hemingford, Wikes, Gervasius, Diceto, Trivet, and the biographers of Becket.

† The earls of Anjou were so named from their device—a sprig of broom (*plante de genêt*).



arisen during the civil contests of the late reign. He obliged all Stephen's mercenaries to quit the kingdom, and with them their leader William of Ypres, whom that king had made earl of Kent; he revoked all the grants made on either side during the late reign; he reformed the coin, which had been adulterated; he forced all those who had obtained possession of the royal castles to resign them, and he insisted on the demolition of those which had been erected by individual nobles*.

Having settled the affairs of England, Henry returned to France (1156) to oppose his brother Geoffrey, who had set up a claim to Anjou and Maine, and had invaded these provinces. He forced him to resign his pretensions, and the apanage left him by his father, for an annual pension of 1000*l*. The people of Nantes, in Brittany, who had just expelled their count Hoel, invited Geoffrey to be their ruler; he gave, of course, a ready consent, but he enjoyed his dignity only for two years: on his death (1158) the king of England claimed Nantes as his heir, and moreover as feudal superior of Brittany. Conan, the duke of that country, had already entered on it; but Henry having gained king Louis to his side by a contract of marriage between his eldest son Henry, now five years of age, and the daughter of that monarch, who was yet in her cradle, soon ended the pretensions of the Breton prince; and Conan moreover, to secure Henry's aid against his unruly subjects, affianced his daughter and only child, an infant, to Henry's third son, Geoffrey, also an infant. On the death of Conan (1165), Henry, as guardian to his son and daughter-in-law, took possession of Brittany.


As soon as he had made good his claim to Nantes, the ambitious king of England cast his eyes on one of the largest and wealthiest provinces of France. Queen Eleanor's grandfather had married the only daughter of Wil-

* There had been one hundred and forty of them erected in the reign of Stephen.

liam count of Toulouse, but William had mortgaged or sold his dominions to his brother Raymond, who on his death quietly entered on them, and they continued in his family, though the duke of Guienne had asserted a claim in 1098, and Louis in right of Eleanor in 1145. These last pretensions were now advanced by Henry ; and forming an alliance with Berenger count of Barcelona, and Trincaval lord of Nismes, he prepared to assert them (1159). Raymond of Toulouse, on the other hand, called on his superior lord king Louis, to whose sister Constance he was married, and Louis, now fully aware of the dangerous ambition of the king of England, prepared to oppose the very claim he had himself advanced some years before. Henry, sensible of the unwieldy nature of a feudal militia, followed the example of his grandfather, and in lieu of service imposed a tax of 3*l.* on every knight's fee in England, and forty Angevin shillings on those of Normandy, and with the produce of this *scutage*, which amounted to 180,000*l.*, he took large bodies of mercenaries into pay.

The war, however, was productive of no event of much importance. Henry was unable to make his claim good, and the pope finally mediated a peace between him and the king of France.

During the anarchy of the late reign the church had gone on emancipating itself from secular control. Holy orders were conferred by the bishops without discrimination ; and as all who had received the tonsure were members of the sacerdotal body, and "the bishops," the historian says, "were more vigilant to defend the liberties and dignity of their order than to correct its faults, and thought they did their duty to God and the church if they protected the guilty clergy from public punishment," rapines, thefts, and homicides were frequently committed by these "tonsured demons," as they are styled by Becket's biographer. The king was assured that not less than one hundred homicides had been committed with



impunity by the clergy since his accession. To this Henry was resolved to put a stop, and knowing the importance of having the primacy filled by a person from whom he would not have opposition to apprehend, on the death of archbishop Theobald (1161), he resolved to bestow the vacant dignity on his favourite and chancellor Thomas à Becket*.

This extraordinary man was the son of a respectable citizen of London named Gilbert à Becket. According to a romantic tradition his mother was the daughter of a Saracen emir. Gilbert, it is said, being on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem had become a captive to the emir, by whom he was treated kindly and admitted to his society. The emir's daughter saw and loved him; she made occasions of conversing with him, in which she learned his name and that he was from London in England. She told him her love, and her desire to become a Christian. An opportunity for escape, however, having presented itself, Gilbert, heedless of the fair Saracen, embraced it and returned to England. She resolved to pursue him, and quitting her father's abode in disguise she proceeded to the coast. She knew but two English words, London and Gilbert; by pronouncing the first she found a ship bound for England, and when she landed she reached by means of it the capital. There she went about the streets crying out Gilbert. Her strange manner and garb drew a crowd after her, and as she happened to go through the street in which Gilbert dwelt the noise attracted the attention of his servant Richard, and he went out to see the cause of it. Richard, who had shared his master's captivity in the East, at once recognised the fair Saracen. He told his master; they brought her in, and then placed her in a nunnery till Gilbert had consulted the prelates who were sitting at St. Paul's. It was their opinion that he should marry her, as she was desi-

* For the history of Becket see Stephanides (Fitz-Stephen) and his other biographers.

rous of becoming a Christian : she was accordingly baptized by the name of Matilda, and made the wife of her beloved Gilbert*.

The fruit of the union of Gilbert and Matilda was a son named Thomas. As the child showed talent he was carefully educated at the schools of Merton, London, and finally Paris. When he grew up he was admitted into the family of the primate Theobald ; he felt his inferiority to those whom he met there in learning, but the grace of his manners and his natural talents made up for the deficiency ; though twice by the arts of his rivals expelled from the palace, he contrived to reinstate himself in the favour of the primate, by whom he was even employed on a negotiation at Rome, which he executed with such ability as to be rewarded with some preferments in the church. With his patron's permission he then went and attended lectures on the canon and civil law, first at Bologna and afterwards at Auxerre. On his return, the provostship of Beverley, and soon after the wealthy archdeaconry of Canterbury, were bestowed on him by the primate, and when Henry II. came to the throne, Becket, then thirty-seven years of age, was by Theobald's influence raised to the high office of chancellor. He speedily won the favour of the young monarch ; the education of prince Henry was confided to him ; he was made warden of the Tower, and had the custody of the castle of Berkhamstead and the honour of Eye, with the services of one hundred and forty knights.

Becket was of a vain, ostentatious temper ; his soul was superior to the love of money, and he spent his large revenues with princely magnificence. He kept a splendid table which the king often honoured with his presence, and at which numerous noble guests sat each day.

* This tale rests on the single authority of Bromton, that collector and embellisher of romantic legends. It *may* be true, but Becket's biographers seem to have known nothing of it.

Numbers of knights entered his service, reserving their fealty to the king, and many barons sent their sons to serve him as to the best school of chivalry. Becket hunted, hawked, and played at chess. His clothing was of the richest quality; his retinue was numerous and splendid. Though his style of living was thus unbecoming an ecclesiastic, still no charge has been made against his morals in private life.

Becket was sent to Paris in 1158 to settle some disputes between Henry and the French king, and to negotiate a marriage between their children. Nothing could exceed the pomp in which he travelled; the people as he passed cried, "What must the king of England be when his chancellor travels in such state!"* In the war of Toulouse Becket appeared at the head of seven hundred knights paid by himself. He was foremost in every enterprise, and when Louis threw himself into Toulouse, Becket was the man to urge an immediate assault, and to make light of Henry's scruples about attacking his superior lord. When the king retired he left the chancellor in command, and the warlike churchman reduced three castles, and in single combat gallantly unhorsed a French knight.

Such was the man whom Henry had fixed on for the primacy, never doubting but that the primate would be as compliant to his will as the chancellor had been. He had been hitherto so little of a churchman, that when the king's intentions were made known, the empress, his mother, remonstrated, the people exclaimed, and the clergy expressed their grief and dismay at such an appointment†. Becket

* See Appendix (M).

† So the clergy of England assert in their letter to Becket. His reply is not satisfactory. If the empress, says he, dissuaded, it never came to the public ear; he heard the acclamation not the exclamation of the people; only those of the clergy who were envious made any objection, and he appeals to the unanimity that prevailed at his election. (Epist. Divi Thomæ, Lib. i. Ep. 108, 126, 127.) Might not a great change have been wrought by royal influence in the course of thirteen months?

himself is said, when the king mentioned to him his intention, to have regarded his gay apparel with a smile, and saying that he did not look very like an archbishop, to have told him plainly that this appointment would probably cause him to lose his favour. He is also said to have expressed the same apprehension to his friends in private. Still he did not, like Anselm, steadfastly decline the high office, and as his smile might have appeared to belie the words that succeeded it, the king persisted; and after the primacy had lain vacant for thirteen months he passed over to England with the royal mandate (1162), and having been previously ordained a priest, was consecrated at Canterbury by Henry bishop of Winchester, in the presence of prince Henry and a numerous assemblage of the nobility and higher clergy.

The sudden change which now took place in Becket's mode of life is ascribed by his friend and biographer to an immediate unction of the Holy Ghost at his consecration; many late writers see in it nothing but hypocrisy. To us the truth seems to be as follows: Becket was, as we have seen, covetous of fame, and of it alone; he had now attained an eminence which left nothing higher to aspire to; and as versed in the canon law he was probably a firm believer in the validity of the rights to which the church laid claim. These, in pursuit of the objects of worldly ambition, he had hitherto made light of, but now glory of a high order lay within his grasp; he had only to stand forward as the champion of the church, to forfeit his royal master's favour, to brave his enmity, and even to offer up his life in sacrifice for the rights of the church, and undying fame awaited him. And all this was Becket prepared to do. We must then admire his magnanimity and daring spirit, while we condemn the duplicity which made him take an office which he knew was given for a far different purpose. But on this as on so many other occasions the end was held to sanctify the means.

Nothing gives a spiritual leader more influence over the minds of the people than the appearance of extreme sanctity and contempt of the world and its vain pleasures. With this then Becket resolved to begin. He dismissed his splendid train and retrenched the luxury of his table. He who had vied with the gayest of the nobles in richness of apparel now wore next his skin sackcloth filled with dirt and vermin; his food was of the coarsest kind; his drink water in which the bitter herb fennel had been infused; his naked back was frequently subjected to the discipline; he washed each day on his bended knees in his cell the feet of thirteen poor persons, whom he then dismissed with food and money. He was constant in reading the Scriptures, in prayer and in ministering at the altar; he walked in meditation, his face suffused with tears, in the cloister; he visited and comforted the sick monks. When religious men came to visit him he received them as if they were angels from heaven.

By way of intimation, as it were, to the king to prepare for the contest, Becket sent in his resignation of the chancellorship, under the pretext that he felt himself hardly equal to the duties of one office, much less of two. This irritated the king, and when the primate came to meet him on his landing at Southampton he received him coldly, and soon after called on him to resign his archdeaconry also. Becket refused, we know not on what grounds, certainly we may say not out of avarice; but he was obliged to yield. Shortly after he obtained the royal licence to attend a council held at Tours by Pope Alexander III. He presented to the council a book of the life and miracles of archbishop Anselm, for whom he solicited canonisation; thus intimating his purpose of treading in that prelate's footprints. As Alexander did not wish to irritate Henry he declined for the present to confer that honour.

One of the canons of this council was directed against all those who detained or usurped church property; this

Becket on his return proceeded to put in force, asserting that no time can avail against the rights of the church. He required the king to surrender the town and castle of Rochester; Richard de Clare, one of the most powerful of the barons, was called on to resign the castle of Tunbridge, and other nobles other possessions, which the primate maintained had originally belonged to his see. While the king and the nobility were in a ferment at this proceeding, the undaunted primate went a step further, and asserted his right to present to all benefices within his diocese. A living falling vacant, of which one William de Eynesford was patron, the primate presented to it; Eynesford expelled the clerk by force; the primate excommunicated him; Henry, as he was a tenant in chief of the crown, required that the sentence should be withdrawn; Becket haughtily replied, that it was not for the king to dictate to him whom to absolve and whom to excommunicate. As however the law was explicit on the subject he was finally obliged to give way.

The contest had thus gone on for nearly two years when an atrocity committed by a person in orders set the king and the primate fully at issue* (1163). This man having seduced a young lady in Worcestershire murdered her father that their guilty commerce might not be interrupted. The public indignation at this horrible deed was high; the king demanded that the clerk should be given up to be tried before the ordinary tribunal; the primate to save him had him placed in the prison of the bishop. Henry then summoned the bishops to meet him at Westminster, and after complaining of the corruption of their courts, by which he said they levied more money off the kingdom

* Becket's friend and biographer Fitz-Stephen expressly says that this was the occasion of the breach between the king and primate. Yet Dr. Lingard, who, when it suits his purpose, sets such value on contemporary biography, takes no notice of it whatever.

within the year than *he* did, required that clerks in future if found guilty of a crime before the bishop should be degraded and then handed over to the civil power. The prelates were disposed to assent, till Becket took them aside and engaged them to refuse on the pretext of its not being just that a man should be tried twice for the same offence. The king demanded if they would obey the ancient customs of the realm; one assented, the rest followed Becket in saying "saving my order." Henry, who knew that this reservation would include whatever they pleased, left the hall in a rage, and next day he deprived the primate of the custody of the royal castles which he still held. For this Becket cared nought, but the other prelates were terrified and counselled submission, in which they were joined by the pope's almoner, who alleged his instructions from the pontiff to that effect. The primate at length waited on the king at Woodstock and promised to observe the customs of the realm, omitting the obnoxious clause. The king treated him with civility, and a great council was summoned to meet after Christmas at the castle of Clarendon near Salisbury.


When the council met (1164) the bishops were called on to fulfil their promise. Becket required that it should be made with the aforesaid reservation. His breach of faith incensed the king; he menaced him with exile, and even with death; two of the prelates with tears implored him to submit; the earls of Leicester and Cornwall assured him they had orders to employ force and conjured him not to make it necessary; the Master of the Temple and one of his knights fell on their knees entreating him to have pity on the clergy; the door of an adjoining room was thrown open and armed men were seen with their clothes tucked up and their swords and battle-axes ready for conflict. The primate was incapable of fear for himself, but he felt a generous anxiety for the safety of others, and he yielded.

Those who best knew these customs were then required to put them in writing, and at Becket's desire the assembly was prorogued to the following day.

The Constitutions of Clarendon, as the customs now reduced to writing were named, were in number sixteen, of which the following are some of the most important :— clerks if accused of crimes shall be tried in the civil courts ; no churchman of any rank shall quit the realm without the king's permission ; all causes not strictly ecclesiastical shall be tried in the king's courts ; all prelates and other spiritual dignitaries who are the king's tenants *in capite* shall be subject to the feudal burthens, and attend in the king's courts ; the king shall hold all vacant sees and receive their revenues till the vacancy is filled ; the election shall take place in the king's presence, and the person elected shall do homage, and swear fealty to the king as his liege lord.

Three copies were made of the Constitutions, to which the prelates affixed their seals according to usage with the king and barons. The primate refused, but it is probable that in this case also his obstinacy gave way. He went home, and as it were to punish his weakness in yielding he abstained from the service of the altar for forty days. The pope at his desire gave him absolution for that sin, as he affected to regard it, at the same time counselling moderation. Soon after he went to Woodstock and solicited an audience of the king, but Henry refused to see him. He then, like Anselm, attempted to escape to France ; but the sailors of Romney would not expose themselves for him to the indignation of the king, and he was obliged to return. He now began to set the Constitutions openly at nought ; and the king on the other side was stimulated to exertion by those about him, who looked forward to a confiscation of church property and a share in the plunder.


The primate was cited to a great council at Nottingham. When he arrived (Oct. 13) the king refused him the kiss



of peace; a charge of high-treason was made against him, and his goods and chattels were declared forfeited. Though the composition in such cases in Kent was but forty shillings, a sum of 500*l.* was required from him, for which he gave security. Next day he was called on for a sum of 300*l.* which he had received as warden of the king's castles; he declared that the whole sum had been laid out in repairs, but added that that should be no cause of quarrel between him and the king. A further demand was then made of 500*l.* which Henry said he had lent him. Becket replied (as doubtless was the truth) that the money had been a gift; his word was not allowed to balance the king's and he gave security for that sum also. On the third day he was required to account for all the moneys he had received when chancellor, and to pay the balance. He replied that at his consecration he had been discharged of all demands by prince Henry and the justiciary in the king's name. He asked permission, however, to retire and consult with the other prelates. In these proceedings the king was plainly acting from a mean, paltry spirit of vengeance, and was seeking to crush the man who he saw preferred what he deemed his duty to the favour of his prince. The claim now made amounted to the enormous sum of 44,000 marks, and though in honour the primate stood discharged, he, by the advice of his brethren, offered 2000, which were of course refused. Some then advised him to resign the primacy; Henry of Winchester alone encouraged him to resolution. As this was Saturday he craved a respite till Monday to make his answer.

Strong as was the primate's mind his body gave way under his mental agitation, and he fell so ill as not to be able to leave his bed on Monday morning. His resolution too almost failed, and he even had thoughts of going bare-foot to the king and throwing himself at his feet, and praying him to be reconciled. But pride and a sense of duty came to his aid, and when some of the bishops came and

recommended submission, he rebuked them in the severest terms. He had taken his final resolution, and that was to brave the royal indignation to the uttermost. He rose, went into the church, and at the altar of St. Stephen performed the mass for that martyr's day, which begins with "Princes sat and spake against me," and he directed to be sung the verse of the Psalms, "The kings of the earth stand up and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and his anointed." Then providing himself with a *host* to have in case of extremity, he moved on towards the council; at the door he took from his chaplain the silver cross he was bearing before him, and carried it himself. The bishops came forth to meet him, and remonstrated with him on this conduct; he heeded them not; he entered the hall, from which the king had retired to an inner apartment with his nobles, and sat down, holding the cross before him. The king's rage at being thus braved became ungovernable, and the prelates trembled for their primate's life. They then asked and obtained the royal leave to appeal to Rome against him for his perjury. They went out, and taxing him with his breach of faith renounced their obedience to him, and cited him to answer their charges before the pope. The primate, who saw clearly the advantage he had now gained, calmly replied, "I hear what you say." They sat down on the opposite side of the hall; the earl of Leicester came out and summoned him to come and hear the sentence passed on him by the temporal peers. He denied with dignity and composure their right to judge him, and cited both them and the prelates to appear before the pope. He rose to depart; a cry of "perjured traitor!" met his ear; he looked round fiercely, and said with a loud voice, that but for his holy orders he would defend himself with arms against those who thus dared to insult him. He returned to the monastery where he abode, followed by the populace and the poorer clergy. He then sent to ask permission to leave the kingdom: the




king took till next day to consider ; but in the night the primate quitted the abbey in disguise, and having wandered about for some time effected his escape to Flanders.

The king of France, a superstitious man, forgetting in his jealousy of Henry that the latter's was the common cause of kings, took the part of Becket, and applied to the pope in his favour. The pontiff gave a cool reception to a splendid embassy which Henry sent to him at Sens, where he was residing, and when Becket came thither he received him with every mark of distinction. Henry then sequestered the revenues of the see of Canterbury, and with the cruelty and injustice common in that age banished the kingdom all Becket's relations and domestics, to the number of nearly four hundred persons, making them swear that they would join without delay the primate, whom he thus hoped to reduce to poverty. But the pope frustrated his design by absolving them from their oath, and distributing them in the convents of France and Flanders. The Cistercian abbey of Pontigny was assigned as the residence of Becket, who now set no bounds to his spiritual insolence ; he declared that "Christ was *in this case* again tried before a lay tribunal, and once more crucified in the person of his servant," taking it for granted, according to the spiritual logic then usually employed, that his cause was the cause of God. At length (1166) he ventured in the most solemn manner to excommunicate all concerned in drawing up or supporting the Constitutions of Clarendon, and all who had laid or should lay hands on the goods of the church. Many persons were mentioned by name in this impious sentence, and threats of the same treatment were uttered against the king himself.

Henry, with all his vigour of character, was superstitious, and he feared while he hated Becket ; he was also aware of the effect which the censures of the church might have on the minds of his people. He gave orders to watch the ports most strictly, that no letters of interdict might be brought

in, and he threatened with the severest penalties those who should bring them or publish them. Meantime he prosecuted with vigour the appeal which he had been induced to make to Rome; his agents there employed effectually those golden arguments which, as one of Becket's friends writes, "Rome never despised," (that Rome which Becket himself says was prostituted like a harlot for hire,) and two cardinals were despatched to hear and determine the whole affair. Becket's arts and obstinacy, however, rendered their efforts ineffectual. At length (1169), when the petty warfare which had continued for some years between Henry and Louis was terminated by a peace and the marriage of their children, this last monarch sought to reconcile Becket and his sovereign. They met in the presence of Louis. Becket humbly knelt before his king, but unyielding as ever, he persisted in saving his order when promising to obey the customs of the realm. Henry in a rage reproached him with his pride and ingratitude, then turning to Louis, "Mark, my liege," said he, "whatever displeases him he says is against the honour of God; but that I may not be thought to act against that honour I make him this offer. There have been many kings of England before me, some who had greater, some who had less power than I. There have been many archbishops of Canterbury before him, great and holy men. What the greatest and holiest of his predecessors did for the least of mine, let him do for me, and I shall be content." The whole assembly declared that he had condescended sufficiently. Louis asked Becket what he could say to this: he still persisted; his friends then took him away by force. Louis treated him with neglect, and apparently was about to withdraw his protection; but his enmity to Henry and his unmanly superstition finally prevailed, and he fell at Becket's feet and with tears implored his forgiveness. When Henry sent to complain of his still protecting him, he replied with an appearance of magnanimity, "If the king of England will



thus cling to what he calls the customs of his fathers respecting the church, he must let me adhere to those of *mine*, which ever were to protect the exile and the fugitive."


At length (1170) the contest was brought to a termination. It was agreed to elude the chief subject of dispute, and Becket was to be restored to his see to hold it as it had been holden by his predecessors. But a new difficulty arose; the primate required, according to the custom of the age, to be saluted with the kiss of peace: the king declared that he had bound himself by a vow never to kiss Becket. The pope sent Henry a dispensation, but he would not depart from his resolution. The difficulty was however at length got over and the treaty concluded.

While the terror of excommunication was suspended over the head of Henry, and he knew not what its effect might be on the minds of his superstitious subjects, he had used the precaution of having his eldest son, prince Henry, crowned by the archbishop of York. Though it was done in secrecy, Becket heard of it, and he prevailed on the pope to suspend the archbishop, and excommunicate the bishops who had assisted at it. On his arrival in England, where he was received with the utmost enthusiasm by the clergy and people, he proceeded to launch his spiritual thunder against those who had assisted at the coronation or persecuted the exiled clergy, and seemed bent on renewing the war with the king. When this intelligence reached the ears of Henry he was greatly moved at the prospect of a renewed contest; the archbishop of York, who was now with him, told him the plain truth, that he could never hope to enjoy peace while Becket lived, and the king strongly excited, cried out before all his court, "To what a miserable state am I reduced, when I cannot be at rest in my own realm by reason of one single priest! Is there no one to deliver me out of my troubles?" Four barons, named William de Tracy, Hugh de Moreville, Richard

Brito, and Reginald Fitz-Urse, who heard these words, bound themselves by a secret oath to make the primate revoke his censures, or to carry him out of the kingdom, or put him to death. They secretly left the court, and landing near Dover went to the castle of Ranulf de Broc, a man whom the primate had just excommunicated, who supplied them with soldiers. They entered Canterbury in small parties, and were received into the monastery by the abbot, who was on the king's side.

It was now the third day after Christmas. On that festival the primate himself had celebrated mass and preached to the people, and in his sermon he told them that his dissolution was at hand, and that as one of their archbishops had been a martyr, there possibly might be another. He then thundered forth his invectives against the king's friends, and excommunicated De Broc and his brother by name.

On the day after their arrival (Wednesday, Dec. 29) the four barons, attended by twelve knights, entered the primate's bedchamber. It was after ten o'clock, he had dined, and was conversing with his friends. They sat down on the ground opposite him, and after a pause Fitz-Urse required him to absolve the prelates; he made an evasive reply; both parties grew warm; the barons desired him then to leave the kingdom; he replied with his wonted spirit; they left the room ordering the monks to guard him; he followed them to the outer door, telling them he valued not their threats. "We will do more than threaten," they replied. In the court-yard they then began to arm themselves. The primate's servants barred the gate, and his friends not without difficulty prevailed on him to retire through the cloisters into the cathedral, where vespers had now begun. He proceeded thither slowly, the silver cross borne before him; when they would secure the doors he forbade them, saying, "You ought not to make a castle of the church." He was ascending the steps of the choir,




when the barons, who after vainly assaying the palace-gate had got in at a window and searched it all over, entered the cathedral. It was now dusk, and he might probably have escaped if he would, but his heroic soul, which aspired to the glory of martyrdom, spurned at the thoughts of flight. They rushed forward, crying, "Where is Thomas à Becket? Where is that traitor to the king and kingdom?" No reply was made. In a louder tone they then cried, "Where is the archbishop?" He advanced saying, "Here am I, no traitor, but a priest, ready to suffer in the name of Him who redeemed me." They required him again to absolve the prelates, and again he refused. They told him then he must die, and Fitz-Urse laying hold of his robe bade him get out from thence or die. He said he would not move. "Fly then," said Fitz-Urse. "Nor that neither," replied the undaunted primate; "if it is my blood you want, I am ready to die that the church may have peace: only in the name of God I forbid you to hurt any of my people." One struck him with the flat of his sword between the shoulders, saying, "Fly! or you are dead." They attempted to drag him out; he clung to one of the pillars; he nearly threw Tracy down, and he flung Fitz-Urse off, calling him pimp. Stung by this insult, the knight made a blow of his sword at him; Edward Grim his cross-bearer interposed his arm, which was nearly cut off, and Becket himself was wounded in the crown of the head as he was bent in prayer. "To God," said he, "to St. Mary and the Saints, the patrons of this church, and to St. Denis I commend myself and the church's cause." A second blow brought him to the ground before St. Benedict's altar. He settled his robe about him, joined his hands in prayer, and expired beneath repeated blows. Brito clove his skull, and the sub-deacon Hugh of Horsea, justly named the Ill Clerk, with the impotent malignity of a savage scattered the brains about with the point of his sword.

Thus perished in the fifty-third year of his age this extraordinary man, a martyr in the cause of the monstrous usurpations of the church, but actuated, we believe, by a sincere sense of duty; and fair might be his fame, and honoured by all might be his memory, if he had not in pursuit of his object, like but too many other saints of his church, trodden in the tortuous paths of bad faith and duplicity.

The murderers of the archbishop retired to the castle of DeMoreville at Knaresborough in Yorkshire, not venturing to appear before the king. Nothing in fact could exceed Henry's consternation when he heard of the bloody deed. He saw an abyss yawning before him, as all the feelings of justice and compassion and honest indignation would be on the side of the church. The king of France and other princes called on the pope to avenge the cause of religion. The embassy, headed by the archbishop of Rouen, which Henry sent to Rome found the pope highly incensed, and about to lay England under an interdict. But as Henry was really guiltless, and the pontiff deemed it wiser to husband his sacred power than run the risk of seeing it exhausted, he contented himself with a general excommunication of the murderers and their abettors. Two legates were sent to Normandy to examine the cause.

While Henry was thus seeking to appease the pontiff, some adventurers, his subjects, were extending his dominion and gaining for him a nominal kingdom. The island of Ireland was inhabited by a portion of the Celtic race, but as they had never been subdued by the Romans, they remained in their primitive barbarism. Christianity had been introduced among them in the fifth century by Patrick, a native of Britain, and the superstition characteristic of the Celtic race had led to the foundation of numerous monasteries, which offered some glimpses of culture and tranquillity amidst the incessant feuds which prevailed among the native tribes, and the endless succession of



murders, abductions, and similar crimes, that were of daily occurrence. Even in the twelfth century the native Irish seem to have been but little advanced beyond the Britons in the days of Cæsar. They lived chiefly on the milk and flesh of their cattle; they had little tillage and few arts. The Northmen had invaded and ravaged this island like England and France, with this difference, that they were here the superiors in knowledge and culture: they founded towns along the coast, and all the trade of the island was in their hands*.

Henry II. had long cast an eye of cupidity on this fertile island. In the very commencement of his reign (1156), when Adrian IV. (Breakspear), an Englishman by birth, occupied the papal throne, he obtained a bull, authorising him to invade and reduce that barbarous island. For as the Irish had been converted before the see of Rome had put forth her monstrous pretensions, and Ireland was in a great measure separate from the world, the Irish clergy followed the simpler doctrines of their first teachers, and did not acknowledge subjection to Rome. Adrian therefore, assuming that all islands on which the Gospel light had shone belonged to Christ's vicegerent on earth, in the plenitude of his power authorised and exhorted the king to invade Ireland, destroy the vice and wickedness of the natives, and oblige them to pay a penny yearly from each house to the see of Rome. The Irish were commanded to submit, the enterprise being for the glory of God, and the salvation of the souls of men.

Henry thus sought to gratify an unjust and grasping ambition by sanctioning a claim against which he was in his own case so soon to contend with all his energy. Various matters, however, prevented him for some years from

* It is impossible to conceive anything more absurd than the accounts given by the Irish historians and antiquaries of the ancient policy and civilisation of their country. Yet even at the present day Mr. Moore is not ashamed to repeat these fables.

taking advantage of the pontiff's generosity. At length a feud among the barbarous natives themselves called his attention toward Ireland. Besides their minor division into septs or clans, the Irish nation formed five kingdoms, Desmond, Thomond, Connaught, Ulster and Leinster, and of the five sovereigns one was usually lord paramount of the whole. The supremacy lay now with Connaught. Dermot MacMorrough king of Leinster was in love with the wife of O'Ruark, chief of Breffney (Leitrim and Sligo), and taking advantage of her husband's absence, he carried her off from an island in a bog, where she had been placed for security. O'Ruark complained to Roderic O'Connor, the lord paramount: their united forces invaded Leinster, and Dermot, who was hated by his subjects, was forced to seek safety in flight. He repaired to king Henry, who was at that time (1167) in Guienne, and offered to hold his kingdom in vassalage of him if restored by his arms. Henry accepted the offer, but as the state of his affairs did not allow him then to engage in the enterprise, he gave Dermot letters patent to his English subjects authorising them to assist him*. The Irish prince came to Bristol, and he soon after made an agreement with Richard de Clare, surnamed Strongbow, earl of Strigul or Pembroke, a man who, having impaired his fortune, was ready for any desperate adventure. Strongbow for his aid was to have the hand of Dermot's daughter Eva, and be declared heir to his dominions. Dermot also engaged two other ruined knights of South Wales, Robert Fitz-Stephen and Maurice Fitz-Gerald. He then returned to Ireland, and lay concealed in the monastery of Ferns, of which he was the founder.

In the spring (1169), Fitz-Stephen, who was first ready, set sail with a small force of thirty knights, sixty esquires, and three hundred archers, and landed at Bannow, not far from the town of Wexford. He was followed by Maurice

* The conquest of Ireland is related by Giraldus (Barry) Cambrensis.

Prendergast with ten knights and sixty archers, and with this small force they ventured to march against Wexford, which was surrendered to them by the Ostmen*, who inhabited it. Fitz-Gerald next arrived with ten knights, thirty esquires, and a hundred archers; and such was the advantage their superior arms and military skill gave the invaders, that no force the Irish could bring together was able to resist them. Dermot, not satisfied with recovering his own kingdom, aspired to extend his odious sway. He sent a messenger urging Strongbow to make haste and perform his promise, and the earl having obtained a reluctant consent from Henry, to whom he repaired in Normandy, quickened his preparations. He first sent over Raymond le Gros with ten knights and seventy archers, and this petty force, we are assured, defeated a body of three thousand Irish who came to oppose them when they landed near Waterford. Strongbow himself now came with two hundred knights and esquires, and a good body of archers. Waterford surrendered; Dublin was taken. Strongbow married the Irish princess, and Dermot dying shortly after, he became sovereign of Leinster, and aimed at the conquest of the whole island. Roderic, a weak inert prince, was roused at last, and with thirty thousand men he came and laid siege to Dublin; but Strongbow made a sally at the head of but ninety knights and their followers, and routed this tumultuous rabble with great slaughter.

The news of the extraordinary success of these adventurers was by no means agreeable to king Henry, who feared they might cease to conduct themselves as subjects. He sent orders for them to return, and forbade any supplies to be sent to them; he finally resolved to pass over himself to Ireland. He sailed from Milford (1172) with a fleet of four hundred sail, and landed near Waterford. All the Irish princes except Roderic and a few others repaired

* That is, Eastmen, as the Northmen called themselves in Ireland.

to him, and acknowledged themselves his vassals. He proceeded thence to Dublin, where he held a great council, at which the Irish princes attended, for regulating the state; and soon after the clergy met in synod at Cashel to reduce the church to due order. Henry kept his Christmas in Dublin, at which festival he entertained the Irish kings and chiefs in a palace of wicker-work framed by the skill of the natives, and the following Easter (1173) he returned to England, leaving Hugh de Lacy justice of Ireland. Strongbow, though deprived of his kingdom, retained great possessions; the conquerors dwelt intermixed with the Irish through Leinster, and gradually extended themselves into the remainder of the island. The two races, separated by origin, language, and manners, never coalesced. Ireland continued as before to be the theatre of anarchy and bloodshed. The injustice of conquest and the evils it produces were not here, as in other cases, compensated by increased civilization, for the English settlers degenerated, while the Irish remained nearly stationary. The scanty annals of the following three centuries in Ireland offer one black tissue of ferocity, vice, and crime, with hardly a gleam of virtue and humanity to break the gloom. The earnest entreaties of the native Irish for the benefits of English law were constantly rejected through the influence of their Anglo-Irish countrymen, who found it more easy to plunder and oppress them while they were separate in law and in language. Ireland (politically speaking) should either not have been invaded, or it should have been conquered as England had been by the Saxons and Normans.

The fame which Henry gained by this nominal conquest of Ireland enabled him to treat on advantageous terms with the pope. In the month of September he met the papal legates at Avranches; and having made a solemn oath that he had neither commanded nor desired the death of the archbishop, and promised to allow that prelate's friends to return, and to restore the possessions of the see, to ac-

knowledge Alexander and permit appeals to Rome, he received absolution and was confirmed in the grant of Ireland*. Becket's zeal was rewarded by the pontiff with canonization as a martyr; numerous miracles (the number stated is two hundred and seventy) were said to have taken place at his tomb, to which vast crowds of pilgrims resorted every year, and rich offerings were made at it. Becket's murderers being only liable to the censure of the church (as the clergy by refusing to submit to the civil law had forfeited its protection) remained some time at Knaresborough unmolested. At length, finding themselves generally shunned as excommunicated persons, they went to Rome to implore the pontiff's forgiveness. He enjoined them as a penance to visit the Holy Land, and they died while there, and were buried at the gate of the Temple.

Henry, now the most powerful monarch of his time, having ended his contest with the church, looked forward to the enjoyment of peace and tranquillity in future. But the king of France, always jealous of him, sought to raise up enmity against him in his own family. Henry had by his queen Eleanor four sons: Henry, whom he had caused to be crowned as his associate in the throne, and for whom he intended England, Normandy, Anjou, Maine, and Touraine; Richard, who was to have Poitou and Guienne; Geoffrey, who would have Brittany in right of his wife; and John, named by the courtiers Lackland (*Sansterre*), but for whom he destined the lordship of Ireland. Prince Henry, excited by his father-in-law king Louis, now insisted on his father's resigning either England or Normandy to him, and on the king's refusal he fled to Paris. Queen Eleanor, whose own frailties had not made her indulgent to those of others, offended by the repeated infidelities of the king, stirred up her sons Richard and Geoffrey to make demands similar to that of their brother, and persuaded

* It would also appear that by a secret article Henry engaged to hold England of the pope as his superior lord. See Lingard, ii. 264, *note*.

them when denied to fly also to the court of France. Eleanor herself also absconded; but she fell soon after into the hands of her husband, by whom she was kept confined for the remainder of his reign. Kings and princes were not ashamed to aid these three undutiful boys* against their indulgent parent. An extensive confederacy was formed; William the Lion king of Scotland was induced to join by the promise of Northumberland, the earl of Flanders by that of Kent, the earls of Blois and Boulogne were to have rewards of the same kind. Many of Henry's continental barons, weary of the strictness of his government, declared for the young princes their future rulers. Even in England the earls of Leicester and Chester openly took arms against their sovereign. A simultaneous invasion of his dominions was proposed by the confederates.

Henry first applied to the pope, who readily excommunicated his enemies for him. But this spiritual weapon proving of little avail, he took into his pay a body of twenty thousand Brabançons, with whom and with his faithful subjects he prepared to make head against his enemies. The earls of Flanders and Boulogne invaded Normandy on the east, king Louis entered it on the south; the former took the town of Aumale, the latter that of Verneuil. The Bretons rose under the earl of Chester and Ralph de Fougères; but the king defeated them near Dol, and then forced their leaders to surrender in that town. A conference followed between the two kings, in which Henry, only stipulating to hold the sovereignty for his life, offered half the revenues of England, or of Normandy and Anjou, to his son Henry, half those of Guienne to Richard, and promised to resign Brittany to Geoffrey. But the insolence of the earl of Leicester broke off the negotiation, for this rebel had the audacity to revile and insult his sovereign, and even to lay his hand on his sword as if to draw it on him.

* Henry was but eighteen, Richard sixteen, and Geoffrey fifteen years old.

The king of Scots had meantime entered Northumberland, and his barbarous hordes committed their usual excesses. But Richard de Lucy, whom Henry had left guardian of the realm, defeated him and forced him to make a truce and retire. Lucy then marched southwards to engage Leicester, who had landed in Suffolk with a large body of Flemings, and being joined by Hugh Bigod of Framlingham was about to push on for the heart of the kingdom. The guardian met him with an inferior force at Fernham in Suffolk*. Ten thousand Flemings fell in the action, and Leicester himself was made a prisoner.

The following year (1174) a number of the English barons rose in arms, and the king of Scots made an irruption at the head of eighty thousand of his ferocious subjects. The guardian, ably supported by the bishop of Lincoln, the king's natural son, a gallant man, took the field against him, but was very hard pressed, and Henry found his own presence requisite in England. He landed at Southampton (July 10), and being either influenced by superstition or resolved to call it to his aid, he proceeded to Canterbury to worship at the tomb of the new saint. When he came within sight of the church he alighted from his horse and walked to it barefoot: he prostrated himself before the shrine of the martyr, and the bishop of London addressing the spectators called on them to believe in the innocence of the king. Henry then assembled the monks in the chapter-house, and placing a scourge in the hand of each, bared his back and submitted to the discipline which they inflicted, and watched that night alone in the church. Next morning, having received absolution, he set out for London, where intelligence soon arrived of the defeat and capture of the king of Scots at Alnwick by Ralph de Glanville, the famous justiciary, and the northern barons; and as this victory was said to have been gained on the very day (July 12) that the king had received absolution, it was

* Fornham St. Genevieve near Bury St. Edmunds ?

regarded as a proof of his being reconciled with Heaven and the blessed martyr. Henry was too politic not to take advantage of this opinion and profess to rejoice in the renewed friendship of the saint. He speedily reduced the English rebels, and returning to Normandy relieved the town of Rouen, which Louis was besieging. A truce was then made; a conference followed at Tours, and an accommodation was effected, Henry giving his sons far less advantageous terms than he had offered them before. He however consented to pardon their adherents.

The Scottish king had to pay dearly for his share in this unjust enterprise. He himself, his bishops and barons were obliged to come to York (Aug. 10, 1175), and in the cathedral do homage to king Henry, acknowledging him and his successors for their superior lord, and ceding to him the fortresses of Berwick and Roxburgh in perpetuity.

Having thus terminated the contest in which he had been engaged with his family and neighbours, Henry for some years turned his thoughts to the improvement of the laws and police of his kingdom.

The turbulence of his sons, however, again (1183) disturbed his peace. He had required Richard to do homage for Guienne to his brother Henry. This violent youth refused, and a ferocious war, in which no quarter was given, commenced between the brothers. The king with some difficulty made up the difference, but immediately his son Henry began to plot against him. A fever, however, seized this young prince and carried him off (June 11). When dying he was filled with remorse, and sent to entreat his father to visit him; the king fearing treachery refused, but sent him his ring by a prelate in token of forgiveness. The dying prince pressed it to his lips, then ordering the bishops who were present to lay him on a bed of ashes, he in that position received the sacraments and expired.

As Richard was now heir apparent, the king called on him to resign Guienne to his brother John. Richard how-

ever refused, and was preparing to have recourse to arms, but on the appearance of his mother in Guienne he quietly gave it up to her. Scarcely was this feud ended when Geoffrey demanded that Anjou should be annexed to Brittany, and meeting with a refusal he fled to the court of France and began to levy troops. He was killed, however, soon after at a tournament (1186), leaving his widow pregnant of a son, who when born was named Arthur, and was acknowledged duke of Brittany.

The Christian dominion in the East was now at an end. The great sultan Saladin had utterly defeated the Christians at Hittin, or Tiberias, and reduced the Holy City and all the towns except a few on the coast. All Europe was filled with grief and indignation; a new crusade, in which the emperor Frederick Barbarossa and the kings of France and England were to be the leaders, was preached (1188). But while the preparations were going forward, the French king excited the restless Richard to invade the territories of the count of Toulouse, and then under pretext of defending the count, his vassal, he made an irruption into some of king Henry's provinces. The French nobles, however, would not stand by their lord in such manifest injustice, and a conference was held to treat of peace. But Philip required that Richard should be crowned king of England, be put in immediate possession of the French provinces, and marry his sister Alice, who had been already sent to England as his affianced bride. Henry, who was suspected of carrying on an illicit commerce with that princess, refused. Richard then revolted and did homage to the king of France, and the war was renewed. In vain the papal legates used their spiritual weapons on the side of Henry; his barons rebelled, town after town surrendered to his enemies, and he was obliged to yield to all the demands of the French king. To complete his grief, when he demanded a list of the barons whom, as usual, he was to pardon, the name of his favourite son John appeared at

the head of it. In the anguish of his soul he cursed the day on which he was born, and pronounced a malediction on his children, which he never would revoke. He fell into a lingering fever, of which he died (July 6, 1189), at the castle of Chinon, near Saumur, his last moments being cheered alone by the presence of his natural son Geoffrey. As soon as he expired the barons and prelates departed; and the attendants stripped the corpse and carried off everything of value. A few days after, king Henry was buried without much pomp at the abbey of Fontevrault, his son Richard and a few prelates and barons attending his obsequies.

Henry Plantagenet was handsome in person and polished in manners. He was eloquent, affable and courteous, a lover of justice and a friend to learning. He was abstemious in his diet and used a prodigious deal of exercise in order to keep down his tendency to corpulence. He was an indulgent parent and a kind master. On the other hand, he was faithless to the marriage-bed, passionate, vindictive, false, and regardless of his oaths and promises. The extreme caution of his temper was often more injurious to his interests than the opposite defect would have been, and cupidity was the moving cause of some of his most beneficial measures. On the whole, however, he was possessed of most of the best qualities of his race, and was one of the ablest princes that have occupied the throne of England*.

Of his sons by queen Eleanor, two alone, Richard and John, survived him; his three daughters were married to the kings of Castile and Sicily, and Henry the Lion, duke of Saxony†. The best known of his natural children were Geoffrey, who was first made bishop of Lincoln and then

* "His character in private as well as in public life," says Hume, "is almost without a blemish." In Hume's eyes the opposition to the church hid the multitude of sins. There is a class of writers, to whom Hume and Charles James Fox belong, who seem to think that chastity is not to be counted among the moral virtues.

† Our present royal family are descended from Henry and his wife.



archbishop of York, and William surnamed Longespé, or Longsword, who espoused Ela the heiress of Salisbury, and obtained with her that earldom and its estates. The mother of one or both of these sons was the Fair Rosamond, daughter of lord Clifford, a baron of Herefordshire*.

To Henry Fitz-Empress must be allotted the high praise of having possessed a legislative mind. Our venerable Common Law, it is thought, may date its origin from his reign. The following are some of the alterations made by this monarch.

The inconveniences which resulted from the King's-Court always attending the person of the king had led to a partial separation of that part of it answering to the court of exchequer. It was first fixed at Winchester, but the numerous frauds on the royal revenue committed in the more remote parts of the kingdom had suggested the employment of Barons-errant or Justices-in-Eyre (i. e. *in itinere*). In 1176 Henry divided the kingdom into six districts, nearly corresponding with the modern circuits, to each of which he appointed three itinerant judges. The office of these judges was to look after the king's interests sedulously, in reality to draw as much money as possible into the exchequer. Thus they were to inquire diligently into all points relating to the wardships and marriages of the king's tenants-in-chief; to see what lands had lapsed to the crown, and what churches were in its gift, what encroachments had been made on the royal forests, etc. It was also a part of their duty to examine into the state of the coinage, to look after fines due to the crown and after the chattels of deceased money-lenders. They were likewise empowered to try malefactors of all descriptions, and to receive the oath of fealty from all persons, from the earl down to the villain. We are thus indebted to Henry's regard to his revenue for an institution which has secured

* See Appendix, (N).

the uniformity of the common law, and gives "the assurance which is felt by the poorest and most remote inhabitant of England that his right is weighed by the same incorrupt and acute understanding upon which the decision of the highest questions is reposed*."

The trial by jury or by the country also received its development in this reign. The Normans, though they had added the wager of battle to the Saxon ordeals, were more inclined to seek for justice by the depositions of witnesses. The itinerant justices were therefore directed when they held pleas, to summon before them four knights of every hundred, who were to choose twelve other knights, or free and lawful men. These twelve were sworn to answer all questions and to obey all commands given them. They were then ordered to *present* at the bar all persons in the hundred suspected of murder, felony, or any other breach of the peace. If the accused had not been taken in the fact, or with the property in his possession, he was allowed to clear himself by the ordeal of water. If he failed he was executed, or his property was confiscated and he was banished, having previously lost a hand or a foot. At the same time, acquittal by the ordeal only secured his life, limbs and property; suspicion still adhered to him, and according to the magnitude of the offence with which he was charged, he had to find security or to quit the kingdom.

The wager of battle took place when the accused, instead of being prosecuted by the jury, was charged by a single individual. In that case, as one man's assertion might claim to be as good as another's, the accused might deny the charge, fling down his glove, and declare his willingness to defend his innocence with his body. If the accuser took up the glove, the judges proceeded to award the trial of battle, provided they saw reason to doubt of the guilt of the accused. In the court of chivalry, or that

* Hallam, ii. 463.

of the constable and marshal, the trial by battle was also awarded when a cause could not be decided by witnesses or documents. Trial by battle, we may observe, took place in civil as well as criminal cases; in writs of right, for example, where a seller denied that he had warranted his goods, or a debtor that he owed the money for which he was sued—in such cases the defendant might fight in person or employ a champion, while the plaintiff was obliged to intrust his cause to the arm of a freeman who would swear of his own knowledge to the justice of his claim. A great improvement made by Henry was by permitting the defendant in civil suits to obtain a writ to stop the wager of battle; the plaintiff had then to get a writ to proceed by ‘Grand Assize*.’ A jury was then empannelled as before, by the sheriff, who were to decide the cause by their own knowledge of the facts, or by the testimony of persons of whose evidence they could have no doubt. If any of the jurors pleaded ignorance of the matter to be tried, they were discharged and others substituted, and in this way a unanimous verdict was at length obtained. The superior equity of this mode was so apparent, that it was gradually extended to causes of all kinds; in course of time, jurors became judges of evidence instead of mere witnesses, and the main bulwark of our freedom, as it is considered, assumed the form in which we now enjoy it.

The ‘Assize of arms’ was made by Henry for the defence of the kingdom. The itinerant justices were directed to inquire into the amount of every man’s property and see that he possessed the arms apportioned to it. For every knight’s fee the holder was to provide a coat-of-mail, helmet, shield and lance; a free layman who had property to the amount of sixteen marks was to be similarly armed;

* *Assize* means simply *sitting*; it signified the court or jury that tried a cause; it afterwards expressed the writ directed to the court. *Assize* also came to signify *rule* or *law*; thus we say the ‘assize of bread.’ The old French collection of the laws of the kingdom of Jerusalem was called *Les Assises de Jérusalem*.

he that possessed only ten marks was to have a habergeon, iron skull-cap and lance; burgesses were to have at least a *wambais* or quilted jacket, a skull-cap and lance*.

The writs and charters of the Anglo-Norman monarchs had been in Latin or Saxon; in the reign of Henry II. the former language was exclusively employed, and such continued to be the usage in the subsequent reigns.

* As there is no mention of bows and arrows, Hume infers that archery was not as yet much practised. This is a mistake, as the tales of Robin Hood alone suffice to show.

CHAPTER II.

RICHARD (CŒUR DE LION).*

1189—1199.

Preparations for the Crusade.—Massacre of the Jews.—Richard's Crusade;—captivity in Germany;—return to England;—his death;—character.—Longbeard.

THE title of Richard to the crown of England was so clear that he remained for more than a month in France after the death of his father, during which time the orders which he sent over to England were punctually obeyed. His first act was to direct the liberation of his mother queen Eleanor from the prison in which she had lain for some years, and he gave her permission to set at liberty such other prisoners as she chose. To those who had been faithful and loyal servants and subjects to his father he manifested the utmost favour, while those who had aided him in his own rebellion were forbidden even to appear in his presence. Having received the ducal crown of Normandy and done homage to king Philip, he at length sailed for England, and landing at Portsmouth (Aug. 13), proceeded to London in order to be there crowned.

On the 3rd of September king Richard was consecrated in the abbey of Westminster by Baldwin archbishop of Canterbury. He thence proceeded to the hall to hold his feast. Some of the leading Jews, as deputies from their afflicted race, (though, fearful of their magic arts, the king had forbidden their presence by proclamation,) ventured to enter the hall bearing gifts after the manner of the East. A Christian struck one of them at the door; the courtiers then fell on them, robbed them, and drove them out; the word flew that the king had given orders for the massacre

* Authorities: same as before, with Vinisauf's '*Iter Ricardi regis Hierosolymitanum*.'

of the Jews; they were slaughtered in the streets, their houses were burnt, their women and children cast into the flames. The king directed a judicial inquiry to be made, and a few of the ringleaders were taken and hanged; but so many of the principal citizens had been implicated that it was not deemed prudent to search too closely into the matter.

Richard had taken the cross, and his martial ardour and chivalrous spirit of religion urged him to lead to the East an army worthy the magnitude of his dominions. To raise the needful funds was now his care. In his father's coffers he found one hundred thousand marks besides plate and jewels. He sold the manors and other domains of the crown; he put the offices of the state to sale; the bishop of Durham purchased the office of justiciary for one thousand marks; the same prelate also bought for one thousand pounds the earldom of Northumberland from the needy king, who jestingly observed that he had made a young earl of an old bishop; for the sum of ten thousand pounds he restored to his Scottish vassal the castles of Berwick and Roxburgh, and released him from all agreements which the late king had "extorted by new charters and by means of his captivity*." To those who remonstrated with him the king replied that he would sell the city of London if he could find a purchaser. All these modes of raising money not sufficing, he, with the pope's permission, took money in lieu of service from those who having assumed the cross preferred remaining at home; he borrowed large sums from his wealthy subjects, and he made those who had committed offences pay dearly for impunity.

Richard appointed the bishop of Durham, and William


* This was no renunciation of feudal superiority as has been erroneously supposed, for it is added, "So however that he shall fully and entirely perform to us whatever his brother Malcolm king of Scotland did of right perform, and of right ought to perform, to our predecessors." Rymer, i. 64. See Lingard, ii. 311, *note*, and Palgrave.

Longchamp, bishop of Ely, the chancellor and papal legate, to govern the kingdom during his absence in the East. He sought to secure the fidelity of his brother John by heaping on him wealth and honours; he gave him eight castles with their lands, and made him earl of not less than six counties; and he married him to Alisa the heiress of the wealthy earl of Gloucester. For greater security he exacted from him and his natural brother Geoffrey, now archbishop of York, an oath to remain in Normandy till his return; from which however he imprudently released them before his departure.

Ere the king set out, the zeal of the warriors of the cross in England once more directed itself against the ill-fated people of Israel. At Norwich, Stamford, and elsewhere many of them were butchered; at York they fled into the castle for refuge after the wives and children of several had been massacred before their eyes. When the governor, who was absent, arrived, they declined admitting him, alleging their necessity. He broke out into a rage and cheered on the populace to the assault; the priests also urged them, a hermit clad in white led them on, and the castle was besieged for some days. Seeing the hopelessness of resistance, a rabbi advised his brethren to make a voluntary surrender of their lives to their God rather than fall into the hands of their cruel foes. A few only dissented, the rest collected and destroyed their jewels and other articles of value; they then set fire to the castle, and while it burned, Jocen, the most honourable man among them, cut the throat of his wife; his example was followed by all; Jocen then destroyed himself and the others did likewise. The few who shrank from voluntary death met their doom next morning from the people. All the bonds of Christians to Jews which were deposited in the cathedral were taken and burnt. Glanville the great justiciary was sent to inquire into the affair, but three persons only were punished.


Our limits do not permit us to enter into the details of king Richard's crusade. In the end of June 1190 he and the king of France reviewed their troops, one hundred thousand in number, on the plains of Vezelay. They thence marched to embark at different ports, and they met again at Messina in Sicily. The sister of Richard had been married to the late king of this island, but his natural uncle Tancred, who had usurped the throne, had refused to pay the queen her dowry and had even cast her into prison. Honour and natural affection urged Richard to demand justice for his sister. Tancred sought to sow enmity between him and king Philip; but after a good deal of altercation Richard became reconciled to Tancred, who yielded to all his demands, and to whose daughter he engaged his nephew Arthur in marriage. When Philip called on him to perform his marriage with the princess Alice he gave a positive refusal, offering to prove that she had borne a child to his father; and Philip, probably aware of the truth of what he alleged, forbore to press him. Shortly after queen Eleanor arrived, leading with her Berengaria, daughter of Sanchez king of Navarre, whom he had wooed while he was residing in Guienne, and Philip gave his consent to the marriage.

Richard sailed from Messina, taking with him his wife and sister. On his way to Syria he made the conquest of the isle of Cyprus; he found the king of France and the other Christian princes with a numerous army of pilgrims beleaguering the city of Acre, while sultan Saladin lay close at hand with his forces. In about a month after the arrival of the English king the garrison surrendered, two thousand five hundred of them being to remain as hostages till the sultan should release an equal number of Christian prisoners and pay a sum of 200,000 byzants. The king of France then went home, leaving a part of his troops behind, and some difficulty or delay arising about the payment of the ransom, king Richard had his prisoners brought out



and coolly massacred in view of the sultan's camp. He led his army thence along the coast toward Jaffa. Near Arssoff he defeated the troops of Saladin, who then destroyed Ascalon at his approach. Negotiations for peace were carried on; a marriage between the queen of Sicily and Malek-el-Adel, the sultan's brother, was proposed, but no treaty could be effected; the Christian army came within view of Jerusalem, and then retired owing to dissensions among its chiefs. At length a truce for three years was made with the sultan, and, the pilgrims having visited the Holy City, the king of England embarked with a small retinue at Acre (Oct. 9, 1192) to return to his dominions. During the sixteen months of his abode in the East he had performed such feats of personal valour that his name long continued to be a word of terror among the Saracens, but the waywardness and inconsistency of his character had prevented him from gaining the esteem or respect of any.

We must now take a view of what was passing meantime in England. Soon after the king's departure Longchamp arrested his colleague the bishop of Durham, and forced him to resign his earldom and his other dignities. He assumed the greatest pomp and state, treated the kingdom as if it were his own, and bestowed all places in church and state on his relations and dependents. In his progresses through the kingdom he was attended by a guard of one thousand five hundred mercenaries, and nobles and knights appeared in his train. The king hearing of this conduct while he was at Messina, appointed the archbishop of Rouen, the earl of Strigul, and three other knights to be his counsellors in order to restrain him; but such was their dread of Longchamp that they did not even venture to show him their commission. At length he dared to drag Geoffroy the archbishop of York from the sanctuary of a church and cast him into prison; and while the general indignation was strong against him for this act prince John summoned a great council at Reading, before which he was



cited to appear. He shut himself up in the Tower of London, but want of provisions forcing him to surrender, he was deprived of his offices ; he retired to Dover, whence he attempted to make his escape to France in the dress of a woman, but he was detected and cast into prison ; he was however soon after suffered to depart. The office of justiciary was now conferred on the archbishop of Rouen, a prelate of great moderation and virtue. Longchamp, whose legatine commission had been renewed, kept threatening to lay the kingdom under interdict ; and the king of France, who was now returned, though he had sought in vain to prevail on the pope to release him from the oath which he had made to Richard not to make any attempt on his dominions during his absence, was preparing to invade Normandy. The refusal of his nobles to aid him in so unjust an enterprise obliging him to desist, he tried to gain over prince John by the offer of the hand of his sister Alice and the possession of king Richard's dominions in France ; but the influence of his mother and the menaces of the English council retained that prince, though unwillingly, in his allegiance.

News now arrived that king Richard lay a captive in Germany. Having suffered shipwreck in the Adriatic, he was proceeding under an assumed name through Germany, when (Dec. 20) he was discovered and arrested at an inn in a small town near Vienna by the duke of Austria, whom he had grossly insulted when in Syria. The duke lost no time in informing the emperor Henry VI. of his prize, and at Christmas he proceeded with his captive to Ratisbon, where the emperor kept that festival, and engaged to give him up to him at the ensuing Easter. The emperor sent forthwith to inform the king of France, who now resolved to take every advantage of Richard's calamity. He offered the emperor a large sum of money to detain him in captivity ; by insisting on a calumnious tale of Richard's having procured the murder of the marquess of Montferrat in the

East, and even plotted against his own life, he induced his nobles to join in an invasion of Normandy; and having held a conference with prince John, he engaged him to aid in stripping his captive brother and benefactor of his dominions. Their iniquitous project however failed. Philip after making himself master of a part of Normandy was forced to raise the siege of Rouen, and conclude a truce with the English regency. John, whose scene of operation was England, having seized the castles of Windsor and Wallingford, proceeded to London to claim the crown, asserting that his brother was dead; but the nobles rejected his claim with contempt, knowing what he said to be false, and the justiciary having assembled an army forced him to beg a truce: not thinking himself safe in England, he fled to his ally the king of France.

When the English nobles heard of the captivity of their king they assembled in council at Oxford (Feb. 28, 1193,) and resolved that the abbots of Broxley and Pont-Robert should proceed to Germany to learn his situation. The abbots met the king in Bavaria on his way to Mentz*, where he was given up (March 23) to the emperor by the duke of Austria. In the mean while Richard's wife and sister, who were at Rome, were urgent with the pope to use his power in his behalf; queen Eleanor also wrote pressing letters to him in favour of her son. By her advice Richard offered to hold his crown in fee of the emperor, and to pay him 5000*l.* a year as tribute.

At Easter Henry brought the king of England before the diet of the empire, and there accused him; of aiding his enemy Tancred of Sicily; of having deposed the king of Cyprus, a relative of the emperor; of having caused the marquess Conrad, a vassal of the empire, to be assassinated; of having ill-treated German pilgrims, insulted the banner of the duke of Austria, betrayed the Holy Land to Saladin, and committed sundry acts of disloyalty against his liege

* See Appendix, (O.)

the king of France. From all these charges Richard defended himself with spirit and dignity ; his eloquence drew tears from some of those who were present, and the emperor embracing him promised him his friendship. He was assigned an abode at Mentz befitting his rank, and on the 29th of June his ransom was agreed on. He was to pay down one hundred thousand marks of silver, and give sixty hostages to the emperor and seven to the duke for the payment of a further sum of fifty thousand, of which twenty thousand were to go to the duke, to whose son he was to give his niece Eleanor of Brittany in marriage. To raise the money a scutage of twenty shillings was imposed on every knight's fee in England, a tallage was laid on the towns, and the clergy gave their plate and otherwise contributed largely. Before Christmas, queen Eleanor and the bishop of Rouen set out with the money for Germany ; but new difficulties were raised by the emperor, to whom the king of France and prince John had made the most lavish promises to induce him to detain his captive for another year. But Eleanor appealed to the princes of the empire, and on the 4th of February 1194, after more than a year's captivity, king Richard was set at liberty, and on the 13th of March he landed at Sandwich in his own dominions. When the king of France heard of his liberation he wrote to prince John in these words, "Take care of yourself; the devil is unchained."

On king Richard's entrance into London, the citizens, we are told, made such a display of their wealth to testify their joy, that one of the Germans who were with him could not help saying, "If our emperor had known the riches of England, thy ransom, O king, would have been far greater." After passing but three days in London, Richard went to lay siege to prince John's castle of Nottingham; and on its surrender he held there a great council, in which all that prince's possessions were declared to be forfeited if he did not appear within forty days to justify himself. It was

further resolved, that to wipe off as it were the stain of captivity the king should be crowned anew. The ceremony was performed at Winchester (Apr. 17.) Richard then embarked his troops on board one hundred ships for the war against the king of France, and landed at Barfleur.

The war, like most of those of the time, consisted merely of skirmishes and taking of castles on both sides. Prince John, who was at Evreux, resolved to throw himself on his brother's mercy. Ever base and treacherous, he invited the officers of the French garrison to dinner, and massacred them while at the entertainment, then with the aid of the townsmen he fell on and slaughtered the garrison. He threw himself at his brother's feet imploring forgiveness; queen Eleanor interceded, and Richard pardoned him, saying, "I forgive him, and hope I shall as easily forget his injuries as he will my pardon." He did not however as yet restore him his possessions.

The war was terminated by a truce (July 23, 1195), on the expiration of which it was again resumed, and during the short remnant of king Richard's reign it was only occasionally intermitted. That monarch's death occurred in the following manner (1199): Vidomar viscount of Limoges, who was his vassal, having found a treasure of ancient coins, sent the king a part as a present; but Richard as superior lord claimed the whole, and on the viscount's refusal to surrender it he placed himself at the head of a body of Brabançons and laid siege to his castle of Chaluz. As he and Marcadee, the leader of his mercenaries, were one day (Mar. 26) taking a view of the castle, one of the garrison, named Bertram de Gourdon, discharged a bolt from his crossbow which hit the king in the left shoulder. Richard returned to his tent and gave orders for the assault; the castle was taken, and, as the king had menaced, all its defenders were hanged except Gourdon, who was probably reserved for a more cruel fate. But the want of skill of his surgeon had rendered the king's wound mortal, and feeling the approach

of death he summoned Gourdon to his presence. "Wretch!" said he, "what have I ever done to thee that thou shouldst seek my life?" "You have killed," replied he, "with your own hands my father and two brothers, and you intended to hang me; I am now in your power, and you may torment me as you will; but I shall endure with joy, happy in having rid the world of such a pest." The king, struck with his reply, ordered him a sum of money and his liberty; but Marcadee unknown to him seized the unhappy man, flayed him alive, and then hanged him. Richard died on the tenth day, in the forty-second year of his age, expressing great penitence for his vices, and having undergone a severe flagellation at his own desire from the clergy who attended him.

The epithet of Lion-heart (*Cœur de Lion*) which his courage procured for him, has apparently been the cause of investing this prince with qualities to which he had little claim; as we (erroneously we believe) couple magnanimity and generosity with an idea of the courage of the monarch of the woods. But Richard was in reality selfish, passionate, cruel, revengeful, and capricious; he had all his father's bad and few of his good qualities. Like him, however, he had a fondness for the Gay Science, or lyric poetry of the South of France, and he even practised that art himself; and like him too he had a ready wit* and could express himself with eloquence. No monarch drew larger sums from his subjects' purses, and for this purpose he scrupled at neither violence nor meanness.

In the latter part of this king's reign (1196) a riot took place in London excited by one William Fitz-Osbert, surnamed Longbeard, "the patriarch," as Hallam says, "of a

* In his war with the king of France, the bishop of Beauvais, who fought against him, was made a prisoner. The pope wrote requiring him to pity his dear son. Richard sent him the prelate's coat of mail with these words, "This have we found; know now whether it be thy son's coat or not." "No, not my son's," said the pontiff, "but of some son of Mars, who may deliver him if he can."

long line of city demagogues," styling himself the "advocate of the People." The cause was the heavy taxes imposed by the king for his war in France, which Longbeard asserted to be necessary, but maintained that they were eluded by the rich and great and thrown entirely on the poor. He went over to France to the king: on his return he resumed his agitation, and so inflamed the people by his speeches from St. Paul's Cross, that no less than fifty-two thousand persons bound themselves to obey his orders. Archbishop Hubert however assembled the citizens and prevailed upon them to give him hostages. Fitz-Osbert clove with an axe the head of the officer sent to arrest him, and then took refuge in the tower of the church of St. Mary le Bow; but the church was set on fire, and as he attempted to escape he was stabbed by the son of the man whom he had slain, and was then dragged to Tyburn, and there hung from the Elms. Miracles were, as usual, said by his partisans to have been wrought at his grave.

CHAPTER III.

JOHN (LACKLAND.)*

1199—1216.

Accession of John ;—his marriage.—Capture and murder of Prince Arthur.—Loss of Normandy.—Contest with the pope.—John becomes a vassal of the Holy See.—Magna Charta.—War between John and his barons ;—his death.

KING RICHARD, it is said, left his dominions to his brother John, though Arthur duke of Brittany, as representative of his father Geoffrey, was, by the feudal law the next heir, and had already been regarded as such by the king his uncle. But, as we have seen, the principles of primogeniture and representation had been hitherto little attended to in the Anglo-Norman line, and Richard may have thought his nephew (who was but twelve years of age) too young, or, as is more probable, he may have been influenced by queen Eleanor, who hated Constance the mother of Arthur, and feared the power she might acquire during the minority.

To secure England John sent thither his fast friends, Hubert archbishop of Canterbury, and the earl-marshal William earl of Strigul, and he induced Robert de Turnham, who held the castle of Chinon, where the late king's treasure was deposited, to yield it up to him. Normandy, Poitou, and Guienne submitted, but Anjou, Maine, and Touraine declared for Arthur, whose side the king of France also took, with the design of embarrassing John, and he sent the young duke to Paris to be brought up with his own son Louis. Meantime the primate and the earl-marshal had held a conference with the English nobility and clergy,

* Authorities : same as before, excepting Bromton, Hoveden, Newbury, Gervasius, and Diceto.


and by presents and by promises of good government had prevailed on them to swear allegiance to John. On his arrival he was crowned (May 27) by the primate at Westminster, and shortly after he recrossed the sea to carry on the war against the king of France.

The war, as usual, consisted in the taking of castles and the making of truces. William des Roches, the governor of the young duke of Brittany, perceiving that Philip was making the cause of that prince merely the stalking-horse to his own ambition, carried him and his mother away, and reconciled them with king John. Ere long, however, Constance fearing for the life of her son fled with him to Angers. As John by an alliance with the emperor of Germany and the earl of Flanders was now too powerful for king Philip, who was also embroiled with the pope, the latter gladly consented to a peace. Louis, son to the French king, espoused Blanche of Castile, the English king's niece, whom queen Eleanor conducted out of Spain for the purpose. He was to receive Berri and Auvergne, and a dowry of twenty thousand marks with her. Philip on his part abandoned the cause of prince Arthur, who lost in consequence the provinces he claimed, and had moreover to do homage to his uncle for Brittany.

Being now secure in his dominions, John, who never knew a moral or religious restraint, proceeded by his disregard of justice to raise up new enemies for himself. He fell in love with Isabel, the beautiful daughter of his vassal the count of Angoulême, and though she was actually betrothed to the count of la Marche, and his own wife the heiress of Gloucester was living, he resolved to espouse her. He therefore made the discovery that himself and his wife were too near akin; and the archbishop of Bordeaux and two other prelates, to whom the pope committed the inquiry, declared the marriage void. Her father having meantime stolen away Isabel from the count of La Marche, the bishop of Bordeaux performed the marriage ceremony.

John conducted his bride into England, where she was crowned with him at Westminster (Oct. 8, 1200). The count of La Marche, though John was his superior lord, would not tamely brook the affront thus offered to him. Aided by his brother the count d'Eu, and secretly encouraged by the king of France, he induced the Poitevins to revolt. John summoned his English barons to cross the sea and reduce the rebels; they refused, unless he engaged to restore and respect their privileges. They were however forced to yield, and either serve or pay him two marks for every knight's fee. Soon after his landing he had an interview with the king of France, in which they renewed their treaty of amity, and at the desire of the latter, John and his young queen went and passed a few days at Paris, where Philip resigned his own palace to them. John then proceeded against the rebels, but instead of attacking them he entered into negotiations, promising them justice; and having thus pacified them a little, he returned to Rouen, where he spent the rest of the year in festivity.

The Poitevin barons, wearied with the duplicity of John, appealed to Philip as the superior lord (1202); and this prince being now on good terms with the church, flung off the mask and declared himself their protector. He also espoused the cause of Arthur (whose mother Constance had lately died), and knighted him and gave him his daughter Mary in marriage. At an interview between the two kings, Philip required that John should resign to his nephew his French provinces, and make sufficient satisfaction to the count of La Marche. John refused these terms, and a war ensued. Philip rapidly made himself master of several towns and fortresses in Normandy. The young duke of Brittany put himself at the head of two hundred lances and set out for Poitou. On his way, hearing that his enemy queen Eleanor was at a castle named Mirebeau and but slenderly guarded, he resolved to en-



deavour to secure her person. He carried by assault the lower part of the castle and was hard pressing the queen, when John, who on learning the danger of his mother had advanced rapidly with some troops to her aid, was seen approaching. Arthur, who had been joined by the count of La Marche and other nobles, advanced to give him battle, but they were defeated and driven back to Mirebeau, where they were miserably slaughtered, and Arthur, the count of La Marche, the viscounts of Limoges, Thouars, and Lusignan, and two hundred knights were made prisoners. The latter were laden with irons, tied on carts drawn by oxen, and sent to different fortresses in England and Normandy; twenty-two of them were actually starved to death at Corfe Castle. The young duke was confined for the present at Falaise*. The king of France, who was besieging Arques, retired on the news of this disaster.

The fate of Arthur is involved in mystery; the belief of the time respecting it seems to have been as follows: on his return to Normandy, John repaired to Falaise, where he had an interview with his nephew, whom he required to renounce his alliance with the French king, and be reconciled to his uncle and natural friend. The gallant but imprudent youth replied with great spirit, demanding the cession not alone of the French provinces but of England to him as the rightful heir. John retired now fully resolved on his destruction. Some of John's counsellors suggested the ordinary expedient of blinding and mutilating him, but the king deemed death the surest course. He proposed his assassination to William de Bray, who replied that he was a gentleman, not a hangman, and refused. A ready agent was soon found and despatched to Falaise; but Hubert de Bourg, the governor of the castle, said he would execute the order himself, and then to save the prince, spread a report of his death. John however was

* Arthur's sister Eleanor, called the "Maid of Brittany," was shut up in a convent at Bristol, where she remained a captive for forty years.

not to be cheated of his prey ; he had the prince removed to the New Tower on the banks of the Seine at Rouen. One night (Apr. 3) Arthur was roused from his repose at midnight, and ordered to come out of the tower in which he lay. The king and his equerry Walter de Mauluc were seated in a small boat at the foot of the tower ; the prince entered the boat ; the lowering countenance of his uncle spoke his fate ; he threw himself on his knees and with floods of tears sued for mercy ; in vain ! he was seized by the hair, and a dagger pierced his bosom ; but whether John himself or Mauluc (who received the heiress of Mulgref and her estates as his reward) was the actual assassin, remains in doubt. A stone was fastened to the body, which was then flung into the Seine*.

This murder lost John a third of his dominions. The Breton barons met at Vannes, and sent deputies to accuse him before his superior lord the king of France. Philip forthwith summoned him to appear and answer before his peers to the charge of having murdered an *arrière-vassal* of the crown of France, his own nephew and vassal, whom he was bound to protect, and who was son-in-law of the lord paramount to whom he owed honour as well as fealty. John sent requiring a safe conduct. Philip said, "Let him come in peace." "But," replied the envoys, "a safe conduct to return?" "Be it so," said he, "if the judgement of his peers allow it." They urged that their master was also king of England, and that his subjects there might not allow him thus to expose himself. "What is it to me?" said Philip ; "is not the duke of Normandy my vassal ? If he has chosen to gain a higher title, I am not thereby to lose my rights over him." As John did not appear he was pronounced by the court to be contumacious, con-

* The murder of Arthur is certain, the manner or the agent is of little importance. The details given above are from the sixth book of the *Philippiad* of the contemporary poet William Brito. The annals of Margan say "*feria quinta ante Pascha propria manu interfecit [rex].*"


demned to death, and declared to have forfeited all the territories he held of the king of France. Nothing could be more accordant with justice on feudal principles than was this sentence, though Philip in seeking it was probably actuated more by ambition than by a sense of equity. The following spring (1203) Philip assembled an army to carry the sentence into effect, and aided by the remissness of John and the general horror which the murder of his nephew had caused, he speedily stripped him of all his continental dominions except Guienne. Queen Eleanor died during these events (1204) at an advanced age, having lived to witness the decline of the monarchy to whose greatness she had so largely contributed. The question whether the Capetians or the Plantagenets were to predominate in France was now finally settled in favour of the former.

It was the misfortune of this most worthless prince that he always had to deal with enemies far superior to himself in ability, and to whom his vices and crimes gave a considerable advantage over him. Philip Augustus was perhaps the ablest man of the line of Capet that ever occupied the throne of France; but had not John basely murdered his nephew, he might never have found a pretext for stripping him of his transmarine dominions. In like manner, the king's vices, by depriving him of the affections and support of his nobility, caused him to succumb in a contest with the Holy See in which right was clearly on his side.

The papal throne was now filled by Innocent III., the ablest and most aspiring pontiff (Gregory VII. excepted) by whom it has ever been occupied. He had lately humbled the king of France and the emperor of Germany, and the death of Hubert archbishop of Canterbury now gave him an opportunity of trampling on the pusillanimous king of England. It had long been disputed between the suffragan bishops and the monks of St. Augustine at

Canterbury which had the right of electing to the primacy. On the death of Hubert (1205) the junior monks, anxious to anticipate the prelates, without even consulting their seniors met at midnight in chapter, and conferred the dignity on Reginald their subprior, whom they instantly despatched to Rome to receive the papal confirmation, strictly charging him to keep the matter a most profound secret till he arrived at the Holy See. Reginald's vanity however got the better of his discretion; as soon as he reached Flanders he assumed the title and state of an archbishop; the news soon reached England; the king and the senior monks were incensed; the junior monks were ashamed, and to accommodate matters the chapter unanimously elected the bishop of Norwich. Fourteen of the monks were despatched to Rome to solicit the pontiff's approval; the suffragans also sent an agent to maintain their claims, and Reginald was now there in person. Innocent saw his opportunity for advancing the claim of the papacy to appoint to spiritual dignities. Setting aside the two elections as irregular, he ordered (1207) the monks to choose for their primate the cardinal Stephen Langton, who was an Englishman by birth though educated abroad. They remonstrated, but in vain; they were forced to obey, one only, Elias de Brantefield, having the courage to persevere in his refusal.

To soothe the king, Innocent sent him a present of four gold rings set with precious stones, accompanied by a letter explaining their mystic meanings. He also wrote him a letter, extolling, and with truth, the virtues and the learning of the new primate. John however was not to be soothed. Suspecting the monks of having played him false he sent two of his knights to expel them from their monastery and seize their lands; and these knights by threatening to burn their dwelling over their heads forced them to depart and seek shelter in Flanders. John then wrote a very spirited and angry letter to the pontiff. In-




nocent replied in very bland terms, but hinting at the story of Thomas à Becket; and this was followed by an order to the bishops of London, Ely, and Worcester to lay the kingdom under an interdict if John did not submit to the church. When they notified this to him, the other prelates with tears besought him to give way; but he swore by the teeth of God (his common oath) that if the pope did so he would send him the whole body of his clergy, bishops and all, and seize their estates to his own use, and that if in future he caught any Romans in his dominions he would put out their eyes and cut off their noses, as a mark by which they might be known. The pope and his adherents were however well aware that this was all idle vaunting; for John had so alienated the minds of his people by heavy and arbitrary taxation, and of his nobles by seducing their wives and daughters, that he could not reckon on any aid from them. The interdict accordingly was pronounced (1208). John in return seized the estates of such of the clergy as obeyed it: he banished the prelates, and he confined the monks in their convents, giving them a mere pittance from their own revenues to support them. To gall the clergy still more he cast into prison the concubines or inferior wives which they generally had, with the connivance of the Holy See, and required large sums as the price of their liberty. Such, we are assured, was the profligate desperation of John, that he sent two knights and a priest, named Robert of London, on a secret embassy to Malek-en-Nasir the Almohade prince of Morocco, offering to hold his kingdom of him, and even, it is added, to embrace the faith of Islam, if he would aid him in the conflict for his crown which he foresaw. The Moslem however rejected the offer with contempt*.

After a year's trial of the effect of the interdict, the pontiff proceeded to the ultimate course of excommunica-

* The story is told by Paris, who had often heard Robert relating the particulars.

tion (1209). But the bishops to whom the publication of it was committed, feared the king too much to obey; and Innocent having waited a little, sent two legates, Pandolf and Durand, to England, who, on John's spurning at the claim of the church to his obedience in things temporal as well as things spiritual, fulminated the sentence (1211). On the return of the legates (1212) Innocent pronounced a sentence of deposition against John, which he directed the king of France to execute, promising him as his reward the crown of England, and (what perhaps Philip valued less) the forgiveness of all his sins.


Philip having summoned all his vassals to his standard assembled a large army at Rouen, and a fleet of seventeen hundred vessels was collected to transport it to England. John on his side prepared for defence; he directed his sea-ports to send their shipping to Portsmouth, and he issued orders to all his vassals to appear in arms at Dover, for the defence of the realm. Such numbers came that provisions ran short; and the king, having selected sixty thousand of the best armed and appointed, dismissed the remainder. This army, though brave, could not however be relied on; its patriotism was chilled by superstition; it hated and despised the prince whose cause it sustained. The agents of the court of Rome (which wished to humble John rather than to aggrandise Philip) saw their advantage; Pandolf, who was in France, sent two templars to John to propose a private interview; the king agreed to it, and they met at Dover. The artful legate then so worked on his fears by exaggerating the power of Philip, and showing him the extent of the disaffection of his own barons, that John in his terror declared himself ready to submit on any terms to the church. Pandolf required that he should acknowledge Langton, restore the other bishops, and make good all the temporal losses and damages they and the clergy in general had sustained during the contest; and he finally recommended and required that, as a means



of securing his kingdom against Philip, he should put it under the protection of the Holy See, by becoming its vassal in due form. To all these demands John assented without hesitation; he forthwith passed a charter, making a surrender of England and Ireland to God, St. Peter, and St. Paul, and to pope Innocent and his successors, and agreeing to hold them of the see of Rome by the annual payment of one thousand marks. He then (May 15), in the church of the Templars and surrounded by his prelates and nobles, paid his homage in the usual manner to the legate, laying at his feet a part of the tribute, on which the haughty priest, it is said, insolently trampled; and though all present were offended, the archbishop of Dublin alone dared to express his feelings.

Pandolf returned to France, and having congratulated Philip on the success of his pious enterprise, commanded him to dismiss his army, and not to molest a vassal of the Holy See. Philip, seeing that he had been made, at a great cost to himself, the mere tool of the pontiff's ambition, remonstrated and complained, but to no purpose. He then appealed to his barons; and their superstition yielding to loyalty, love of fame, and interest, they vowed to aid him in his attempt on England. The earl of Flanders (a secret ally of John's) having refused, Philip, swearing that France should be Flanders or Flanders France, invaded that province. But Longsword earl of Salisbury, John's natural brother, went over with the English fleet of five hundred sail, and attacking that of the French as it was moving along the coast, destroyed one hundred and took three hundred ships. Philip unable to save the rest was obliged to burn them himself, and thus abandon all hopes of the conquest of Flanders.

The court of Rome removed her anathemas in order, as she had laid them on in order. The sentence of deposition was taken off by admitting John to do homage. When he went to meet Langton and the prelates at Winchester



on their return (July 20) he threw himself on the ground before them, and with tears implored them to have pity on him and the realm. The primate then led him into the chapter-house; and, having administered to him an oath of obedience to the pope and of good government of his kingdom, gave him absolution and admitted him to dine with him, to the great joy of the people. The interdict however was kept on till satisfaction for their losses should have been made to the clergy; but the bishop of Tusculum, who came over as legate on this and other accounts, partially relaxed it by allowing mass to be performed with a low voice in the churches. When inquiry was made, the clergy rated their losses at a sum which amazed the king; he offered one hundred thousand marks for a receipt in full; they refused, but the pope directed his legate to be content with forty thousand. The result was that the superior clergy were indemnified, while the claims of the inferior clergy were treated with neglect. The legate at length (June 29, 1214) took off the interdict, which had lain on the kingdom for upwards of six years.

An extensive confederacy against the king of France having been formed by the sovereigns of Germany and England, and the earls of Flanders, Toulouse and other princes, John landed an army at La Rochelle and recovered Poitou. But the battle of Bouvines (July 27), in which Philip with a far inferior force defeated one hundred and fifty thousand Germans, Flemings and English, dissipated all the prospects of John. On receiving the news of this disaster he reembarked his troops without delay, having obtained a five years' truce from the king of France.

In his contests with the pope and the king of France, John had met with nothing but loss, disgrace and humiliation. It only remained for him to be humbled by his own subjects. The author and prime mover of the resistance to the arbitrary power of the crown which laid the true

foundation of English liberty, was the primate Langton ; and since it is not given to us to read the heart of man, and we can only judge of his motives by his acts, we may not with justice deem the prelate to have been actuated by any motives but love of equity and sincere patriotism, and his name should therefore be always held in veneration by the lovers of their country.

Langton thus proceeded. In the oath which he administered to the king previous to his absolution he made him swear to restore the good laws of king Edward. On the 4th of August following, in a council held at St. Albans under Fitz-Peters the justiciary, orders were given that the laws of Henry I. should be followed ; and on the 25th of the same month, at a meeting of prelates and barons at St. Paul's in London, Langton showed them that monarch's charter, and explained to them its applicability to their grievances. John on hearing of this despatched an envoy with a large sum of money to Rome, and Innocent deeming it to be for his interest to support his vassal against his barons, sent, as we have seen, the bishop of Tusculum to England. The affair of compensation to the clergy occupied the time till the king's expedition to France ; and shortly after his return the barons held a large meeting at the abbey of Bury St. Edmund's (November 20, 1214), under the pretence of keeping the festival of the saint, where Langton again exerted his eloquence, and they swore on the high altar to make war on the king till he should confirm their liberties by a charter. On the festival of the Epiphany (Jan. 6, 1215) they repaired to the king at London and urged their demands, and he promised to give them his answer at Easter. In the interval he made some concessions to the church ; he assumed the cross to secure to himself the privileges of a crusader ; he sent to summon his mercenaries from the continent, and he directed the sheriffs to make the freemen in their counties take the oath of allegiance. Both parties had sent to

Rome, but the pontiff openly took the side of the king, and wrote a circular to the barons enjoining them to cease from hostility.

In Easter week the barons, at the head of two thousand knights with their esquires and other attendants, met at Stamford, and on the Monday after (April 27) advanced to Brackley, within fifteen miles of Oxford, where the king then lay. He sent the primate and the earls of Pembroke and Warrenne to ascertain their demands. They were the same as before; the king with an angry sneer cried, "And why do they not also demand my kingdom?" He then in a fury swore that he never would grant liberties which would make him a slave. He sent back the mediators with some offers, which the barons regarding as evasions would not hearken to. Pandolf and the bishop of Exeter insisted that the primate was bound to excommunicate the barons; he replied, that if the king did not dismiss his foreign troops, he should deem it his duty to excommunicate *them*. John finally sent offering to leave all matters to the decision of the pope, and of eight persons to be chosen by the barons and himself. This also they refused; they proclaimed themselves to be the army of God and of Holy Church, appointed Robert Fitz-Walter to be their general, and commenced operations by investing Northampton. After spending fifteen days before it, they raised the siege and advanced to Bedford, which Beauchamp its governor delivered up to them, and hither deputies came inviting them to London. They set out at once, marched all night, and reached that city in the morning (May 24). It being Sunday the citizens were in the churches, but the gate named Aldgate stood open to admit them, and they occupied the city without opposition.

They now summoned all those who adhered to the king or had not yet declared themselves, to join them, under the penalty of being treated as public enemies. Numbers immediately flocked to them. "It is needless," say the

writers, "to name the barons who composed the army of God and of Holy Church: they were the whole nobility of England." John, who was now at Odiham in Hampshire with a retinue of but seven knights, seeing resistance hopeless, resolved to dissemble. While he in secret wrote to excite the pope against them, he affected to yield to their demands with cheerfulness. At Merton (June 8) he granted a safe-conduct to the deputies of the barons, who were to meet him at Staines, and on Trinity Monday (June 15) both parties appeared on the mead named Runnymede on the banks of the Thames between Staines and Windsor. On the one side stood Fitz-Walter and the flower of the English nobility; on the other the king, attended by Pandolf the legate, eight bishops, and fifteen barons and knights. The barons presented in writing the heads of their grievances, and of the means of redress: these were, according to usage, reduced to the form of a charter, the king affixed his seal to it (June 19), and issued it as a royal grant, and copies were sent all through the kingdom. Aware of the king's perfidy, the barons further required that all foreign officers and their families should be sent out of the realm; the city and Tower of London be left in their hands till the 15th of August; and a committee of twenty-five barons be appointed as guardians of the charter, with power to make war on the king if he violated it. When the king had assented, the barons renewed their homage.

By the Great Charter (*Magna Charta*), as it is named, the church was secured in its liberties and rights, the barons were relieved by the regulation of the feudal burdens of aids, scutages, wardships, etc., and their subvassals were assured the same advantages by their lords; London and the other cities and boroughs were guaranteed their ancient liberties and usages, and secured against arbitrary taxation; foreign merchants were protected; no man was to be imprisoned or outlawed but "by the legal

judgement of his peers or by the law of the land." Again, says the king, "We will sell, delay, or deny justice to none;" and to regulate fines, it is added, "a freeman shall be amerced according to his offence saving his freehold, a merchant saving his merchandise; and a villain saving his waggonage." The court of Common Pleas was to be stationary; the forest-laws were mitigated.

Such is a faint outline of this celebrated charter, the foundation on which the noble edifice of English liberty was raised; for it contains the germ of every subsequent improvement that has been made. The names of Langton, Fitz-Walter and the other eminent men who forced it from a reluctant tyrant must be held in everlasting honour; for they thought not of themselves alone, they cast the shield of protection over the rights and interests of all, even of the stranger. The blessings which have flowed from Magna Charta are hardly to be appreciated. To use the glowing words of a philosopher and a historian*: "To all mankind it set the first example of the progress of a great people for centuries, in blending their tumultuary democracy and haughty nobility with a fluctuating and vaguely limited monarchy, so as at length to form from these discordant materials the only form of free government which experience had shown to be reconcilable with widely extended dominions. Whoever in any future age or unborn nation may admire the felicity of the expedient which converted the power of taxation into the shield of liberty, by which discretionary and secret imprisonment was rendered impracticable, and portions of the people were trained to exercise a larger share of judicial power than was ever allotted to them in any other civilized state, in such a manner as to secure instead of endangering public tranquillity;—whoever exults at the spectacle of enlightened and independent assemblies, who, under the eye of a well-informed

* Mackintosh, *History of England*, i. 221. See also Hallam's judicious remarks on this subject.

nation, discuss and determine the laws and policy likely to make communities great and happy ;—whoever is capable of comprehending all the effects of such institutions, with all their possible improvements, upon the mind and genius of a people, is sacredly bound to speak with reverential gratitude of the authors of the Great Charter. To have produced it, to have preserved it, to have matured it, constitute the immortal claim of England on the esteem of mankind.”

John had behaved to his barons with the utmost courtesy, and even set his seal to the charter with a smile. But when they were gone he gave vent to his smothered rage; he cursed the day of his birth, gnashed his teeth, rolled his eyes, gnawed sticks and straws, acting like a maniac. He then began to think on revenge; he sent to implore the aid of his liege lord at Rome, and he despatched some of his friends to hire for him bodies of the mercenaries now so numerous in France and Flanders. Meantime the barons, in the exultation of success, had appointed a splendid tournament to be holden at Stamford on the 2nd of July; when to their surprise they learned that it was the king's intention to take advantage of their absence at it, to seize the city of London. They put off the tournament, and sent to the king at Winchester, who laughed at their suspicions. Various conferences were appointed; the king, who only sought to gain time, eluded them; at length (September 1) he went to Dover to meet the mercenaries, who now were flocking fast to his standard. The barons in alarm directed William d'Albiny to occupy the castle of Rochester; the king forthwith laid siege to it; as the castle was unprovided with stores, Albiny was obliged to surrender (November 30). John was about to hang the whole garrison, but the leader of his mercenaries, who feared retaliation, prevented him. However, though he spared the knights, he executed their followers.

While engaged in the siege of Rochester, John learned

that, as he expected, the pontiff had declared in his favour, and absolved him from his oaths. As the barons took no heed of the Holy Father's mandates, he formally excommunicated them by name (December 16), declaring them to be worse than Saracens. The king on his side having divided his army at St. Alban's, sent his brother the earl of Salisbury with one part to ravage the eastern counties, while he marched in person with the remainder northwards. The northern barons at his approach (January, 1216) set fire to their houses and corn and fled into Scotland, to whose king they did homage. John ravaged the country in a most dreadful manner; the inhabitants were tortured, massacred and pillaged; castles, towns and villages were burnt, the king usually giving the example by setting fire in the morning to the house in which he had passed the night. He penetrated to Edinburgh, wasting and destroying Scotland also. Similar atrocities were perpetrated by the earl of Salisbury and the hordes he commanded.

The barons, who were now at London, seeing the king at the head of a force which they could not resist, their castles taken, and their lands granted away to the leaders of mercenaries, resolved after some days' anxious deliberation to call in foreign aid; and they sent to offer the crown to Louis son of the king of France, the husband of the princess Blanche. Louis, setting at naught the anathema launched at him by the pontiff, sailed from Calais with a fleet of six hundred and eighty ships and landed (May 30) at Sandwich. John, who lay with his army at Dover, had retired to Bristol, wasting the country on his way. Louis advanced to London, where he received (June 2) the homage of his new subjects. John's mercenaries now left him in great numbers; several of his barons went and did homage to Louis; among them was his brother the earl of Salisbury, whose wife the tyrant it is said had debauched*. He also lost his main support the pope, who

* Gulielm. Armor. 90, quoted by Lingard. Yet the fact can hardly be true. See Bowles' *Annals and Antiquities of Lacock Abbey*.

died at this time (July 16); the legate Gualo however was strenuous in his cause, and he still held all the fortresses in the kingdom. Louis awaked the suspicions of the English barons by grants to his own followers, and it was whispered that he had a design to destroy them as traitors. John made lavish promises; many barons went over to him; his affairs were brightening, when, as he was crossing the Wash on his way from Lynn, the waggons containing his treasure were swallowed up by the tide and the stream of the Welland. He came with a heavy heart to the monastery of Swinestead, where he was seized by a fever, caused by anxiety or a surfeit, or as some said by poison; and four days after (October 19) he breathed his last at Newark, in the forty-ninth year of his age, leaving behind him a character equally odious, despicable and atrocious, his numerous vices being unredeemed by a single good or great quality.

With respect to John's surrender of his kingdom to the pope, we must in justice observe that it derived much of the odium which attaches to it from his personal character, and from the future encroachments of the papal see. His nobles assented to it, and never made it a ground of reproach to him. His father had done the same, so also had the king of Arragon, and the Norman monarchs of Naples and Sicily, and his brother Richard had declared himself a vassal of the empire. Vassalage, we must recollect, was no dishonour in those days, even to the highest.

CHAPTER IV.

HENRY III. (OF WINCHESTER.)*

1216—1272.

Submission of the barons.—Hubert de Burgh.—War with the king of France.—Extortions of the pope.—Efforts to restrain the king's prodigality.—Simon de Montfort.—The Mad Parliament.—Battle and Mise of Lewes.—Origin of the House of Commons.—Escape of prince Edward.—Defeat and death of Leicester.—Statutes of Marlbridge.—Death of the king.

HENRY, called of Winchester, the place of his birth, the heir to the throne, was but ten years of age when his father died. The prelates and the barons of the royal party resolved on his immediate coronation, and the ceremony was performed at Gloucester (Oct. 28) in the presence of the legate; the young monarch at the same time doing homage and swearing fealty to the pontiff. On account of his tender years the care of his person and the government of the realm were committed to the earl of Pembroke, earl-marshal, with the title of "Governor of the King and Kingdom †."

Henry, though a child, was a more formidable rival to Louis than his father had been. His tender years inspired pity. "We have persecuted the father for evil demeanour, and worthily," said the marshal at the coronation; "but this young child whom ye see before you, as he is in years tender, so is he innocent of his father's doings." The marshal himself was a man of great probity, talent and energy; the legate had directions to uphold the minor's cause with all his authority. The Great Charter was confirmed in a council holden at Bristol (Nov. 12), and their liberties were secured to all who should return to

* Authorities, same as before.

† *Rector regis et regni.*

their allegiance; and soon the earl of Salisbury, William d'Albiny, and several knights came and ranged themselves beneath the royal banner.

By the surrender of two castles the regent obtained from Louis a truce till the following Easter. On its expiration (Apr. 30, 1217), as the royalists had laid siege to the castle of Montsorel, the troops of Louis and the barons, numbering six hundred knights and twenty thousand footmen, marched from London to its relief, wasting and plundering the country on their way. The royalists retired at their approach; and they entered Lincoln in triumph, and laid siege to the castle, which was defended by a heroine named Nichola de Camville. Pembroke assembled an army at Newark and marched to her relief. Deceived by the apparent magnitude of his forces the hostile army remained in the town; and while by way of bravado they were pressing the siege of the castle, the regent's troops burst open one of the gates and entered the town; a sally was at the same time made from the castle: assailed on all sides they were forced to give way; the common men were massacred without mercy; three earls, eleven barons, and two thirds of the knights were made captives. The town was given up to pillage; the women and children had sought refuge on board of the boats in the river, but their weight sank them, and most of the fugitives perished.

This victory, named "The Fair of Lincoln," secured the crown to Henry. The only hopes of Louis now lay in the troops which his wife was collecting for him in France. These troops embarked (Aug. 24) on board of a fleet of eighty large and a great number of small vessels at Calais; but Hubert de Burgh the justiciary put to sea with but forty ships, and boldly attacking them gave them so total a defeat that but fifteen escaped. Louis was now obliged to seek his safety in negotiation. A treaty was signed at Lambeth (Sept. 11) by which he and his foreign troops were allowed to depart, and an amnesty was granted to his

English adherents. The barons all returned to their allegiance, and the Great Charter was again confirmed*.

The death of the able and virtuous earl-marshal, which occurred the very next year (1219), was a general misfortune. The custody of the royal person was then committed to Peter des Roches, a Poitevin, whom John had made bishop of Winchester; the exercise of the royal authority was entrusted to Hubert de Burgh the justiciary. These ministers were rivals; the one favoured the native families, the other united himself with the foreigners whom John had introduced into the kingdom. Pandolf, who was returned as legate, held the balance between them.

As a means of recovering the crown lands and the royal castles from those who held them, the legate, at the desire of De Burgh and the council, declared the young king of age (1223) to dispose of his lands, castles, and wards. Hubert instantly required the surrender of the royal castles; the earl of Albemarle and some others resisted, but Hubert levied troops, the legate caused them to be excommunicated, and they were obliged to submit. One of John's foreign favourites named Fawkes de Breauté, who held the castle of Bedford, having had several verdicts found against him for the violent expulsion of persons from their lands, had the audacity to seize one of the judges, and imprison him at Bedford. As he was a partisan of Des Roches, the justiciary resolved that he should not go unpunished. He led a force, in which the king was present in person, and besieged the castle of Bedford. After a brave defence it was forced to surrender; and, to deter others, all in it but the archers were hanged. Fawkes, who was at Chester, was forced to give himself up to the king's mercy; he was stript of his property, and banished the kingdom with his family. Shortly after the bishop of

* The portions of the Great Charter relating to the forests were now withdrawn and a separate Charter of Forests with mitigated penalties was enacted.


Winchester also withdrew, under the pretext of a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Hubert now ruled without control for several years, and he every day augmented his wealth by the grants which he obtained from the crown. At length (1232) the aspect of his affairs began to change; Des Roches returned and was received with great favour by the king; complaints of Hubert's avarice and ambition were poured into the royal ear, and finally, when, on occasion of an inroad of the Welsh the king complained of want of money, it was hinted to him that by making Hubert and his relations disgorge their gains his wants might easily be supplied. Hubert was forthwith called on to account for the wardships, royal rents and other revenues which had passed through his hands since he had been made justiciary. Conscious of guilt, or despairing of justice, he took sanctuary at Merton; by the king's orders the mayor of London set out at the head of twenty-thousand citizens to drag him from the sanctuary; but he changed his mind, and gave him five months to prepare his defence. Hubert took advantage of his liberty to go to visit his wife at Bury St. Edmund's; a body of three hundred horse was sent to fetch him back and place him in the Tower; Hubert, who was in bed when he heard of their approach, jumped up and fled undressed as he was to the nearest church, where he stood on the steps of the altar holding the host in one hand and a cross in the other. But his pursuers seized him, placed him on a horse, with his legs tied under the belly, and thus led him to London. The king however, in awe of the church, sent him back to his sanctuary, giving the sheriff of Essex strict charge to seize him if he attempted to escape. A ditch and paling were made round the church, and on the fortieth day Hubert was forced to surrender himself. He was placed in the Tower and then brought to trial; he made no defence, throwing himself on the mercy of the king. He was sentenced to forfeit

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the greater part of his property and to be confined in the castle of Devizes. But the next year (1233), on occasion of a quarrel between the king and his barons, the charge of this castle being given to a retainer of the bishop of Winchester, Hubert fearing for his life let himself drop down one night into the moat, and then took refuge in a church. Here he was instantly besieged by the sheriff; but in a few days a party of horse came, who drove off the sheriff and conveyed Hubert to the earl of Pembroke in Wales; the next year (1234), when peace was made between the king and the barons, Hubert was restored to his estates and honours. It does not appear that he ever again engaged in affairs of state.

The rising of the barons which restored Hubert to liberty was caused by the insolence of the bishop of Winchester, who now engrossed the king's favour. This prelate invited over vast numbers of his countrymen, the chief offices of state were conferred on them, and the royal revenues were employed to enrich them. The indignant barons refused to attend the king's council unless the foreigners were dismissed; adding that, if the king persisted in favouring them, they would drive both him and them out of the kingdom, and put the crown on a head more worthy to wear it. The king and bishop however, by detaching some of the leading members, broke up their confederacy. William earl-marshal having fled to Ireland, orders were sent to the lords justices there to send him "dead or alive" to England. As the shorter mode, they engaged, it is said, a surgeon, who was called in to cure some of his old wounds, to cauterise them in such a manner as to cause his death. Peter des Roches now went on in his violent course, dreading no opposition; the influence before which he fell came from a quarter whence perhaps he least expected it. Edmund archbishop of Canterbury, attended by several other prelates, came to the king (1234), and having set before him the dangerous consequences



both to himself and his people of the course which he was pursuing, insisted on the dismissal of the foreigners, menacing an excommunication in case of refusal. The king was terrified and submitted, the foreigners were banished, and a ministry was formed, in which the primate, a man of great prudence and integrity, was included.

A celebrated historian, and one who cannot be suspected of an undue partiality to the clergy, has thus expressed himself on an occasion similar to the present; and their conduct in this and the preceding reign amply confirms the truth of his observation.

“It must be acknowledged that the influence of the prelates and the clergy was often of great service to the public. Though the religion of that age can merit no better name than that of superstition, it served to unite together a body of men who had great sway over the people, and who kept the community from falling to pieces by the factions and independent power of the nobles. And, what was of great importance, it threw a mighty authority into the hands of men who by their profession were averse to arms and violence, who tempered by their mediation the general disposition towards military enterprises, and who still maintained amidst the shock of arms those secret links without which it is impossible for human society to subsist.”

But the evil from which the primate had delivered the kingdom speedily re-appeared. In 1236 the king married Eleanor daughter of the count of Provence. Nothing, we are assured, could exceed the splendour of the queen's coronation, and all ranks vied with each other in their demonstrations of joy and loyalty. But a large number of foreigners appeared in her train, and the weak good-natured king soon began to shower his favours on them. Her uncle William, the bishop elect of Valence, became prime minister; Richard, another uncle, received the honour of Richmond and the rich wardship of earl Warrenne; and Boniface, a third uncle, was made on the death

of Edmund archbishop of Canterbury. Young ladies were brought over from Provence and married to the king's wealthy wards. Henry's own mother Isabella, who had married her first lover the count of La Marche, sent over her children by him that they might have their share of the good things that were going, and the soft-hearted Henry took care to provide for them all.

The throne of France was at this time occupied by Louis IX., the most just and upright of sovereigns. His father Louis VIII. had bound himself to restore Normandy and Anjou; but so far from doing so, he had invaded and conquered Poitou. The troubles of the early part of Henry's reign had prevented him from making any efforts to recover his dominions; in 1230 he landed in person at St. Malo, and advanced as far as Nantes, but nothing of any importance occurred. Twelve years after (1242) the count of La Marche having done homage to Alphonse, whom his brother the king of France had made count of Poitou, was so stung by the reproaches of his wife that he returned to Poitiers and bade him defiance. A war was the natural result; Isabella applied to her son for aid. Henry summoned a great council and demanded a supply of men and money; the barons told him it was his duty to observe the truce while it was observed by the French king. Isabella still urged, asserting that his presence alone would suffice. Henry therefore embarked with his brother and his queen, taking with him three hundred knights and thirty casks of silver.

Henry landed at Royan on the Gironde, whither his Gascon vassals repaired to him, and with a force of twenty-thousand men he advanced to the town of Taillebourg on the Charente. Louis, who had hastened from Paris, reached that place at the same time with a far superior force. The French with their usual impetuosity attacked and carried the bridge which the Gascons held (July 19), and passed over in great numbers. Henry's troops however main-

tained the fight bravely, till news came that a large body of the enemy had crossed the river lower down. Fearing to be cut off, they then broke and fled for Saintes, and the king himself narrowly escaped captivity. Next morning the French appeared before that town; the count of La Marche sallied forth, and an indecisive action was fought. But the count now saw the danger of his situation, and he resolved to make terms for himself if possible with Louis. By means of his son he succeeded. Henry was just sitting down to table when he heard what the count had done, and at the same moment he learned that the townsmen had agreed to admit the French troops in the night. It was resolved to fly without delay to Blaye, and so rapid was the flight that the military chest and the costly ornaments of the king's chapel were left behind. Louis did not pursue, as a dysentery had begun to prevail in his army, and a truce for five years was made shortly afterwards. The conscientious Louis, doubting of the justice of the title by which he held the English possessions in France, was most anxious to obtain a renunciation of them from Henry, who on his side demanded an equivalent. At length (1259), after many years of negotiation, an arrangement was effected. Henry made the renunciation, receiving in return the Limousin, Perigord and Querci, and the reversion of the Agenois and part of Saintonge. He then did homage as duke of Guienne and a peer of France.

In all his difficulties at home and abroad the feeble king placed his chief reliance on the power and authority of the pope, to whose ambition and avarice he in return yielded himself as a ready instrument. This was in the main most advantageous to the cause of freedom, for the clergy as sharers in the common evil united with the barons in their opposition to the crown. The pope, who in consequence of the contest which he had engaged in with the emperor Frederick II. was immersed in debt, had recourse to every possible mode of extracting money from the

clergy. By appeals to their generosity and duty he obtained large sums; these not sufficing, he proceeded, in imitation of the temporal princes, to levy tallages on them. The frequency of these exhausted the patience of the English clergy; they remonstrated; the barons and even the king took part with them, but still the pope triumphed, and they were obliged to pay. Another grievance of the clergy was what were called Provisions, by which the pope, regardless of the rights of patrons, assumed the power of appointing to vacant benefices. In consequence of this a large portion of the richest livings were in the hands of Italians, who, after providing at a small expense for the performance of the duty, drew the rest of the income out of the kingdom. The pope himself acknowledged that the benefices thus held amounted to 50,000 marks a year, a sum exceeding the revenues of the crown; and the fact that Mansel the king's chaplain held seven hundred livings will give an idea of the extent to which pluralism was carried. An association named the Commonalty of England was formed (1232) to oppose the Provisions: its head was a knight named Robert Twinge, who had been deprived by a provision of his right of nomination to a living. The principal of the barons and clergy secretly favoured it, and though it did not number more than eighty members it became very formidable to those against whom it was directed. The papal couriers were murdered; the foreign clergy were seized, thrown into private dungeons and obliged to pay heavy ransoms; the produce of their farms was carried off, and sold by auction or distributed among the poor. After this had continued for eight months the king interfered. Twinge went to Rome to plead his cause; the pope acknowledged his right to nominate, and declared that provisions should be in future confined to the benefices that were in the gift of spiritual bodies; thus artfully seeking to separate the interests of the laity from those of the clergy. In this however he did not quite suc-

ceed; the spirited conduct of Robert Grosseteste the illustrious bishop of Lincoln, who (1253) absolutely refused to admit a provision into his diocese, gave a check to the practice.

The pope soon made a new attempt on the property of the clergy and laity of England. At the time when the Normans made the conquest of the kingdom of Naples, they had subjected it as a fief to the Holy See. It had passed by marriage to the emperors of Germany, between whom and the popes there had long been unceasing enmity, open or concealed. On the death of Frederick II. (1254) the pope, as the superior lord, and urged by his hatred of the German princes, made an offer of the crown to Richard earl of Cornwall, king Henry's brother, esteemed the richest subject in Europe. The earl was too prudent to be caught by the dazzling offer; the pope then offered the crown to the king himself for his younger son Edmund, and the thoughtless Henry at once swallowed the glittering bait: he engaged to land with an army in Italy, and bound himself to defray the whole expenses of the war. These soon became considerable, for success was uniformly on the side of Manfred, the natural son of Frederick, who now maintained the imperial cause. Henry applied to his barons to aid him (1256), but they saw through the designs of the pope and refused to contribute a shilling. Pope and king then fell on the unfortunate clergy. The former granted the latter a tenth of all the benefices in England for five years, the goods of all the clergy who died intestate, and the revenues of all vacant benefices and of non-residents: he also placed at his disposal the proceeds of the crusade which he ordered to be preached against Manfred. The bishop of Hereford, who was at Rome, drew bills to the amount of 150,540 marks on the prelates and abbots of England in favour of some Italian bankers; and as it was expected that they would prove rather restive, the legate had orders to exert his authority to the utmost

over them. When he called them together, and told them the pleasure of the pope and king, their surprise and indignation knew no bounds. The bishop of Worcester vowed that he would sooner die than yield; the bishop of London declared that if the king and pope should take the mitre off his head, he would put a helmet in its place. The legate told them that all their benefices belonged to the pope, and that he might dispose of them as he pleased. He finally menaced them with excommunication, and they were constrained to yield; all the favour they could obtain was the being allowed to deduct the amount of the bills out of the tenths they were to pay. Still the money did not suffice for the pope, and as Henry could raise no more, the pontiff transferred the crown to Charles of Anjou, brother to the king of France, who slew Manfred in battle and gained the kingdom (1266).

The high spirit of the English barons could ill brook the manner in which the numerous grants which they had been induced to give to their thoughtless monarch had been squandered away in inglorious projects of ambition, or lavished on foreign favourites; and various attempts were made to restrain the royal extravagance. In 1242, when about to grant a supply, they required that it should be placed in one of the king's castles, under the custody of four barons to be appointed by the great council; and in 1244, on a similar occasion, they demanded that four barons should be declared 'Conservators of the liberties of the nation,' two of whom should always attend the king and watch over the expenditure, and control the administration of justice; and that the chancellor, the justiciary, two justices of the King's Bench and two barons of the Exchequer should be chosen by the council, and hold their places independent of the crown. The king would only consent to renew the Great Charter, and when he got the supplies he thought no more of his word. In 1248, when he again demanded a supply, he met only with reproaches for his breach of


faith and oppression of his people ; money was positively refused.

Want of money again (1253) compelling Henry to beg a supply, he took the vow of a crusader, under the sanctity of which he deemed himself sure of some part of his subjects' money. The clergy deputed the primate and the bishops of Winchester, Salisbury, and Carlisle to remonstrate with him on his oppression of both them and the people. Among other grievances they noticed the improper mode of appointing to vacant dignities : the king, who wanted not for wit, deficient as he was in good sense, replied, " It is true I have in this been somewhat to blame : I obtruded you, my lord of Canterbury, on your see : I employed both threats and promises, my lord of Winchester, to have you elected : I acted very irregularly, my lords of Salisbury and Carlisle, when I raised you from the lowest stations to your present dignities. But I will correct these abuses ; and you too, to make the reform complete, ought to resign and try to be re-elected in a more regular manner." They said that the question was not to correct past errors, but to prevent their recurrence. The king promised as before ; a supply was granted, but it was required that he should confirm the Charter in a more solemn manner than had yet been employed. The bishops and abbots all stood holding lighted tapers in their hands ; the Great Charter was read aloud : they pronounced the sentence of excommunication against whomsoever should violate it ; then casting their tapers on the ground, they exclaimed, " May the soul of him who incurs this sentence thus stink and corrupt in hell ! " The king, who during the reading had stood with a calm and cheerful countenance, holding his hand on his heart, replied, " So help me God, as I shall observe and keep all these things, as I am a Christian man, as I am a knight, as I am a king crowned and anointed ! " Yet incapable of energy enough to keep a promise, he immediately returned to his old courses.

Hitherto Henry had been supported by the advice and influence of his brother the earl of Cornwall, a man of energy and talent far superior to his own ; but he now lost that support. The earl, whose good sense had led him to reject the diadem of Naples, was not proof against the offer of that of Germany. He went to that country, taking with him his immense treasures, which he speedily squandered in pursuit of the splendid phantom ; for though he was crowned king of the Romans (1257), he never was able to make his authority acknowledged. His absence from England left the king unsustained, and the barons confederated to limit and restrain the royal authority. ✓

The most eminent man among the barons at this time was Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester, a Frenchman by birth, and younger son to the cruel fanatic who headed the nefarious crusade which Innocent III. had preached against the sect of the Albigenses in the south of France*. De Montfort was married to the eldest sister of the earl of Leicester, on whose death without issue his estates went to his sisters. The title of Leicester fell of course to the sons of the countess de Montfort ; and as the eldest would not for the sake of it give up the dignities he held in France, he resigned in favour of his brother Simon, who thus became earl of Leicester, and soon after (1238) espoused the king's sister, the dowager countess of Pembroke. The barons were highly indignant at this match, but the talents and address of Leicester were such that he rapidly won their affections and those of all orders of the people. Henry committed to him the government of Guienne, which he ruled for some years with great vigour. He was recalled to answer charges made against him by the archbishop of Bordeaux and some of the Gascon nobility. In the interview with the king, the latter giving way to anger called

* "A name," says Lingard, "celebrated in the annals of religious warfare." So gently are a series of some of the most bloody massacres in the annals of popery alluded to by the candid historian !



him a traitor. "Ha! traitor!" cried Leicester; "if you were not a king you should repent that insult." "I shall never," replied Henry, "repent anything so much as having let you grow and fatten within my dominions." The efforts of mutual friends however reconciled them for the present.

Leicester, who enjoyed a high degree of consideration with all orders of the people, formed at length, in conjunction with Humphrey de Bohun high constable, Roger Bigod earl-marshal, the earls of Warwick, Derby and Gloucester, and the other great barons, a regular confederacy for limiting the royal authority. When in 1258 the king, in extreme want of money for his Sicilian war, summoned a great council to Westminster, the barons appeared at it in full armour. On the entrance of the king they laid aside their swords. "Am I then a prisoner?" cried Henry in alarm. "No, sir," replied the earl-marshal; "but by your prodigality and your partiality to foreigners the realm is plunged in misery. We therefore require that the powers of government be entrusted to a committee of prelates and barons, who may correct abuses and make good laws." After some dispute the king assented, and it was agreed that a great council should be holden at Oxford to make all the needful regulations.

The council, which from the consequences of its acts was afterwards named the Mad Parliament, met at Oxford on the 11th of June. The barons came attended by their vassals in arms, and as the king had no military force he was obliged to submit to their dictation. A committee of twenty-four prelates and barons, one half selected from the king's council, the other half chosen by the barons, was appointed. Each twelve then selected two out of the other twelve, and these four had the selection of fifteen persons who were to form the council of state. This council consisted of seven of each party, with Boniface the primate, the queen's uncle, at its head; the king's brother and nephew, who were of the twenty-four, were carefully ex-

cluded from it, so that the influence of the reformers was paramount. They forthwith removed the chancellor, the justiciary, the treasurer, and the governors of the principal royal castles, and replaced them by men devoted to the barons. They then commenced their measures of reform, which were as follows. The freeholders of each county were to choose four knights to inquire into the damages committed in it under the royal authority, and lay them before the council:—The freeholders were also to choose each year the high-sheriff for each county; the sheriffs and the great officers of state were to give in their accounts annually, and parliaments* to be holden thrice in each year. To secure the obedience of parliament, it was directed, under pretext of saving the members trouble and expense, that twelve persons should represent those who were to compose the parliament, and that whatever these should enact in conjunction with the council of state, should be viewed as the act of the whole.

One of the first acts of the council was to force the king's half-brothers to quit the kingdom; they then obliged the earl of Warrenne, the most powerful man of the king's friends, and his nephew prince Henry, and finally his son prince Edward, now a spirited youth of eighteen years of age, to take an oath of obedience to the ordinances of the council; and when in the following year (1259) Leicester learned that the king of the Romans was on his return, he sent to prohibit him from landing unless he engaged to take the oath also, a mandate which that prince found it necessary to obey.

By the original agreement all the reforms were to have been completed by Christmas. But those who held the power were by no means willing to part with it so soon, and under the pretext of further important reforms being needful they continued in office all through the next year (1259). A quarrel between Leicester and Gloucester first

* This word was now come into use as equivalent to Great Council.




shook their authority; and when at length the promised reforms were made public, they appeared so insignificant in the eyes of the people that a great change took place in their affections toward the barons. Leicester after his quarrel with the earl of Gloucester had retired to France, and so many of the barons went over to the king that he soon found himself in a condition to resume his authority (1261). A bull was easily obtained from Rome absolving him from his oath; he displaced the justiciary, chancellor, and sheriffs appointed by the barons, and put others in their room, and exercised all the functions of royalty. During the following year (1262) various interviews took place between him and the barons, and it was proposed to refer their differences to the king of France and the king of the Romans. Leicester, who had returned, went back to France, declaring that he would never trust a perjured king.

Toward the end of the year Henry went over to visit the king of France. Leicester then returned to England, where the discontent of the barons had revived, in consequence, it is said, of prince Edward's partiality for foreigners. He speedily reorganised the old confederacy, which was now joined by prince Henry and by Gilbert de Clare the young earl of Gloucester. Henry on his return (1263) having ordered the barons to swear fealty to both himself and his son, the earl of Gloucester objected to the latter part, and retired to Oxford, where he was joined by the malcontent barons: Leicester came and placed himself at their head. They took Worcester and some other towns, ravaged the lands of the royalists and advanced toward London, where the people were generally in their favour. The king shut himself up in the Tower, prince Edward went to secure the castle of Windsor, whither the queen his mother was proceeding by water; but the populace assembled, assailed her with the vilest epithets, flung all kinds of filth into her barge, and prepared to sink it with


huge stones as it should pass the bridge. She was obliged to have recourse to the mayor for protection, by whom she was placed in safety at St. Paul's.

The king of the Romans now attempted to mediate, but the power of the barons was so great that the king was forced to resign nearly the whole of the authority he had resumed. Various causes, however, having brought over many barons to his side, he was able to take the field once more. On this occasion Leicester was nearly made a prisoner. He had entered Southwark with a small body of troops; the royalists secured the gates of London; the king appeared at one side of Southwark, the prince at the other. Leicester, deeming destruction certain, advised his followers to assume the cross and prepare for death like Christians; but the king having, in compliance with the usages of the time, sent a herald to summon them to surrender, the populace had time to learn their danger, and bursting open the city-gates, to come and relieve them. The forces now being nearly equal on both sides, it was agreed to submit to the arbitration of the king of France. Henry appeared in person before that monarch; Leicester, on the plea of a fall from his horse, by attorney. The award of Louis was that the Provisions of Oxford should be annulled, the king be restored to his full authority, and a general amnesty take place. The pope confirmed the award, and directed the archbishop of Canterbury to excommunicate all who should refuse to submit to it (1264). The barons however, as soon as they heard of it, exclaiming that it was partial and unjust on the face of it, refused obedience and resumed their arms. The city of London, the Cinque Ports, and adjoining counties were entirely in their favour; the parties were nearly balanced in the midland counties and the marches of Wales; while the North and West of England were decidedly royalist. Leicester, by means of his devoted partisan Fitz-Thomas the mayor of London, caused the citizens to enrol themselves in a mili-



tary association, and a formal convention for mutual aid and support was sworn to by them and the principal barons. On this occasion the unhappy Jews at London and some other places were plundered and massacred; a measure which no doubt was of advantage to the circumstances of some of the confederate nobles. The property of the Lombards or Italian bankers in London also became a prey to the partisans of the barons.

The king being joined by the Scottish border-lords, Bruis or Bruce of Annandale, Baliol of Galloway, and Comyn of Badenoch, and by the Piercies of the North, the great houses of Bigod, Bohun, Warrenne, and others of his own subjects, took the field once more. He took Northampton by assault; Leicester and Nottingham opened their gates; he then marched southwards to the relief of Rochester, to which Leicester was laying siege. At the approach of the royal army, the earl, fearing for London, raised the siege and fell back to that city; the king having made an ineffectual effort to recall the people of the Cinque Ports to their allegiance, led his troops to Lewes in Sussex. Leicester now resolved to put the whole to the hazard of a battle. Having united fifteen thousand Londoners to his army, he led it toward Lewes. At Fletching he halted, and sent a letter to Henry, stating that it was not against *him* but his evil advisers that they had taken arms. The reply was a defiance on the part of the king, the prince, and the king of the Romans, with a challenge from the two last to Leicester and Derby to meet them in the king's court and decide the matter by single combat. Leicester then addressed his troops, representing to them their cause as that of justice and religion; he directed them to fix a white cross on their breast and shoulder, (as if they were Crusaders,) and to pass the night in devotion. In the morning the bishop of Chichester pronounced a general absolution, assuring, according to usage, those who should fall of immediate admittance into heaven.



On the 14th of May the baronial army appeared before Lewes; the royal troops in three divisions, led by the prince, the king of the Romans, and the king himself, advanced to give them battle. The prince, who led the van, fell with fury on the Londoners, who occupied that post of honour in the opposite army, speedily routed them, and drove them off the field. In his eagerness to punish them for their general turbulence and for their insults to his mother, he lost sight of the rules of prudence, and he pursued them for four miles, instead of falling on the rear of Leicester's troops. Leicester, taking advantage of the prince's error, directed his whole force against the main body of the royalists, defeated them, and took the king of the Romans prisoner; then charging the third division, scattered it and obliged the king himself to surrender. Prince Edward on his return from the pursuit of the Londoners, three thousand of whom had strewn the field with their bodies, found the battle irretrievably lost. As he traversed the field the baronial troops came out and attacked him; the king's brothers, earl Warrenne and about seven hundred knights instantly fled to Pevensey, and embarked for the Continent. The next morning a convention named the 'Mise of Lewes' was concluded, by which the prince and his cousin Henry d'Allmaine* agreed to surrender themselves as hostages for their fathers; all prisoners taken during the war were to be released, and arbitrators were to be chosen to regulate all the points of difference between the two parties. The number slain in the battle is said to have been five thousand on each side.


Leicester was now in effect the ruler of the kingdom; he carried the king about with him as a pageant, treating him with apparent respect, and employing his name and authority for his own purposes; he kept, in breach of treaty, the more energetic king of the Romans a close prisoner at

* Allmaine, is Allemagne. He was so called because his father had been chosen by the electors of Germany.

Kenilworth, and the young princes were confined at Dover. If we credit the chroniclers adverse to him and his cause, his rule was a complete tyranny; his ambition and his avarice knew no bounds. He seized, they say, for himself the estates of not less than eighteen of the barons taken at Lewes, kept the ransom of the king of the Romans, (though he was the earl of Gloucester's prisoner,) and that of all the other barons, while he told those of his own party that they should be content with having their lives and properties secured by the victory he had gained. He is even accused of having encouraged the piracy to which, to the ruin of all foreign trade, the people of the Cinque Ports betook themselves, by receiving a third of their ill-gotten gains.


One of the earliest acts of Leicester's authority was to send persons named 'Conservators of the Peace' to each county, to execute the principal functions of the sheriffs, to whom however he left their offices. These conservators caused four knights to be chosen in each county to represent it in a parliament, which met on the 23rd of June, and which was consequently at Leicester's devotion. It was enacted in it that the king should, for the present, delegate the power of choosing his council to three persons, who should choose nine councillors to be empowered to exercise nearly the whole royal authority; and if in any case the agreement of two thirds of the council could not be obtained, the matter should be reserved for the committee of three. As this committee was composed of Leicester himself, the earl of Gloucester, and the bishop of Exeter, and the council was of course selected from Leicester's creatures, it is quite plain that all that was proposed by this state machinery was to conceal the person of the real actor from the view of the people.

Leicester's power was nevertheless far from secure; the pope and the king of France were both hostile to him; the latter favoured the efforts of Henry's queen to raise an



army of mercenaries for the assertion of the royal cause; the former directed the legate Guido to proceed to England and excommunicate Leicester and the other enemies of the king. Leicester having menaced the legate with death if he entered the kingdom, the bull was committed to four English prelates with orders to publish it. As it was against their will that they received the bull, they easily let the officers at Dover take it from them, and as an appeal was made to Rome, where the pope was just dead, nothing further could be done for some time. Leicester was equally fortunate with respect to the queen's armament. This princess had collected at the port of Damme in Flanders a large body of troops with shipping to carry them, but adverse winds prevailed so long that they at length disbanded and dispersed, and Leicester was thus relieved from uneasiness on this account.


The commencement of the year 1265 is rendered for ever memorable by a measure destined to have the most important influence on the development of the British constitution; and which, as it has been elegantly expressed, has "afforded proof from experience that liberty, order, power and wealth are capable of being blended together in a degree of harmony which the wisest men had not before believed to be possible." Hitherto the great councils of the nation had consisted only of the prelates, barons, and tenants in chief of the crown; but Leicester in the summons for a parliament at this time directed "the sheriffs to elect and return two knights for each county, two citizens for each city, and two burgesses for each borough in the county;" thus establishing the principle of representation, and giving the people of the towns, who had hitherto been taxed at will, a share in the legislature of the realm. By a fortunate chance also they were allowed to sit along with the knights of the shire and not in a separate chamber; a circumstance which greatly contributed to give them dignity and importance. That Leicester could have foreseen



the full effects of what he was doing is not to be supposed; the measure was one which in the natural course of things must inevitably have occurred within a few years; deputies of the towns had sitten for the last century in the Cortes of Spain; towns were everywhere rising into importance, and becoming of too great weight in the balance of states to be any longer subject to the arbitrary power of princes and nobles. Leicester may doubtless have seen much of this, but his probable motive was merely to add to the parliament members who he knew would be wholly devoted to himself and the ready agents of his will.


As Leicester had summoned to this parliament none of the prelates and barons but such as were devoted to him, every thing was done at his pleasure. After some weeks' conference an arrangement was made with the king and the prince preparatory to the liberation of the latter, in which every precaution for securing the continuance of Leicester's power was taken. The prince was then (Mar. 13) declared free by the barons; but he found his liberty only nominal as he was still guarded by the adherents of Leicester.

The power of this nobleman though thus great could not from its nature be permanent. He was a foreigner, and at most but the equal of those proud nobles over whom he had raised himself; and though a large portion of the clergy, irritated by the frauds and extortions of the Holy See, supported him as the champion of religion, and the people of the towns and the lower orders in general were his partisans, their weight was not yet able to counterpoise that of the great barons. Yet he at first crushed all symptoms of resistance, and he forced Roger de Mortimer and the other marchers of Wales to surrender their castles and submit to the sentence of parliament, by whom they were ordered to quit the kingdom for various periods. He then ventured to imprison the earl of Derby under a charge of treason, and he meditated seizing the earl of Gloucester at



a tournament at Northampton; but the earl aware of his danger retired to his own county and there raised the royal standard. Leicester hastened to Hereford with the king, prince, and a large body of knights; negotiations were entered into by which each party sought to deceive the other. The great object of Gloucester was to liberate the prince, whose presence would be of the utmost importance to his cause, and it was thus effected:—Edward under pretence of taking an airing obtained permission one day after dinner to ride out of Hereford; at some distance from the town he proposed to his keepers to run races with their horses; they agreed; several matches were made and run, the prince and those in the secret taking care not to engage in them. By the time the keepers' horses were pretty well tired, it being near sunset, a man mounted on a grey horse appeared on the summit of an adjacent hill and waved his bonnet. The prince knowing the signal set spurs to his horse and galloped off attended by Gloucester's brother, another knight, and four esquires. The keepers pursued, but when they saw Roger Mortimer and a party of armed men issue from a wood and receive the prince they turned back. Mortimer conducted the prince to his castle of Wigmore, and next day Edward met Gloucester at Ludlow. They mutually agreed to forget all past injuries and exert themselves to restore the king, who should bind himself to govern by law, and to exclude foreigners from his councils.

The first care of the royalists was to gain the towns on the Severn and break down the bridges over that river. Leicester being thus cooped up in Hereford, lay waiting for the tenants of the crown whom he had summoned by writs in the king's name; and he formed an alliance with Llewellyn prince of Wales, agreeing to sell him for 30,000 marks all the king's rights over that country. When joined by the Welshmen he attempted to get over to Bristol, but being attacked at Newport by prince Edward he



retired and sought refuge in Wales. His son Simon de Montfort, who was besieging Pevensey when he received the summons to repair to his standard, having stopped for some days at Kenilworth, the family mansion, was suddenly fallen on by the prince while in his bed; most of his companions were made prisoners, and he himself escaped naked into the castle*.

Leicester, ignorant of the fate of his son, had crossed the Severn and reached Evesham on his way to Kenilworth. The prince, who was at Worcester, set out in the night, and early in the morning (Aug. 4) arrived in the neighbourhood of Evesham. He made three divisions of his forces, of which one led by himself stood on a hill on the road to Kenilworth, the other divisions led by Gloucester and Mortimer occupied the two remaining roads. They displayed the banners captured at Kenilworth, which caused them at first to be taken for the troops of Simon de Montfort, but when Leicester ascended an eminence and viewed their numbers and array, he saw the mistake; he then said to those about him, "The Lord have mercy on our souls, for our bodies are prince Edward's." Having according to his usual custom spent some time in prayer and communicated, he charged the prince's division. Being repulsed, he formed his men in a circle, and thus for some time resisted all the efforts of the royalists. The old king, whom he still had with him, was placed in the front cased in armour. One of the royalists not knowing who he was wounded and unhorsed him, and would probably have slain him, but that he cried out, "Hold, fellow! I am Harry of Winchester!" and the prince, who was at hand, hearing his voice, ran up and conveyed him to a place of safety. Meantime Leicester's horse was killed under him; as he fought on foot, he asked if they gave quarter. "Not to traitors!" was the reply, and he soon fell slain over the

* They lay out of the castle, say the *Annals of Mailros*, for the sake of bathing early in the morning.


body of his eldest son. Of all the barons and knights who fought on his side but ten remained alive. The victory of the royalists was complete and final.

The lifeless body of Leicester was brutally mangled by the foot soldiers of the royal army, but his remains were afterwards removed by the king's orders and interred at the neighbouring abbey. His memory long lived among the populace; the title of "Sir Simon the Righteous" shows the estimation in which he was held, and though he was excommunicated even miracles were ascribed to him. Of the superior talents of Leicester both as a statesman and a warrior few doubts can be entertained; of the purity of his motives we have not the means of speaking with certainty, for our authorities are his warm panegyrists or his zealous adversaries. Those modern writers who are the partisans of the papacy or of royalty, of course represent him as actuated solely by interest and ambition, and judging by analogy we may suspect that they are not far astray.

The victory at Evesham completely broke the power of the barons. The king of the Romans and the other prisoners made at Lewes were set at liberty by those who held them, in hopes that they would prove intercessors in their behalf. A parliament met (Sept. 8) at Winchester, by which among other matters it was enacted that the estates of Leicester's adherents should be confiscated, and the city of London be deprived of its charter. These rigorous measures only served to rekindle the flame, and partial risings took place in various quarters. Simon de Montfort leaving a stout garrison in Kenilworth took refuge in the isle of Axholm in the fens of Lincolnshire; he was, however, compelled by the prince to submit, and on the intercession of the king of the Romans he was allowed to quit the kingdom and promised a pension of five hundred marks. He however soon after put himself at the head of the Cinque Ports' pirates, but the prince led his

troops against these towns, and having taken Winchelsea by storm forced them to sue for peace. An amnesty was granted and they swore fealty to the king. The prince then marched into Hampshire, where a bold rebel named Adam Gordon was ravaging the country. He came up with him in a wood near Alton, and though Gordon was the most athletic man of the time, he engaged him singly, wounded, unhorsed and made him a prisoner. In admiration of his valour he then gave him his liberty and restored him to his honours and estate, and Gordon ever remained attached to his benefactor. The garrison of Kenilworth still held out, though blockaded by the king in person with a large force, and the fugitives from Axholm and other places had secured themselves in the Isle of Ely, once the retreat of the Saxons against the Normans.

Many being of opinion that the late parliament had dealt too severely with the adverse party, a committee of twelve prelates and barons was formed during the blockade of Kenilworth to devise more moderate measures. They divided the offenders into three classes, to whom they gave the option of redeeming their estates from those to whom the king had granted them; the first being to pay a sum equivalent to seven years' income, the second to that of five, the third to that of two or of one year. This 'Dictum of Kenilworth,' as it was named, was confirmed by the king in parliament: the garrison of Kenilworth and those in the Isle of Ely rejected it, but famine forced the former to surrender after a siege of six months, and measures were about to be adopted for reducing the others, when the earl of Gloucester, taking a sudden disgust, retired to his earldom, and having levied troops there ostensibly against Roger Mortimer, suddenly marched to London, united himself with the citizens, and made himself master of the Tower. The king and prince appearing with a large force, he submitted on receiving a free pardon, and the royal forces being then directed against the Isle of Ely, it was



reduced by a plan similar to that employed by the Conqueror. Llewellyn of Wales was also forced to submit and engage to pay tribute; and the king having thus reduced all his opponents, held (Nov. 18, 1267) a parliament at Marlbridge (Marlborough), in which several of the Provisions of Oxford were confirmed, and some new laws enacted, which are known by the name of the Statutes of Marlbridge.

The kingdom being now at peace prince Edward resolved to indulge his piety and love of adventure by joining the excellent king of France in a crusade to the Holy Land. He required that the earl of Gloucester should either accompany or follow him; he gave liberty to the earl of Derby and a new charter to the citizens of London; and then set out accompanied by his wife Eleanor of Castile and his cousin prince Henry. Finding that king Louis had died on the coast of Africa and that his son Philip had given up the crusade, he stopped for the winter in Sicily. He sent his cousin Henry on business to England, but that prince stopped at Viterbo to be present at the election of a pope. Here one morning (Mar. 3, 1271) he went into a church to hear mass, and as he stood in meditation after it was concluded, he suddenly heard a voice cry, "Thou traitor, Henry, thou shalt not escape!" He turned and beheld his cousins Simon and Guy de Montfort in full armour and their swords drawn. He sprang to the altar; its sanctity availed him nought; he fell pierced by a multitude of wounds. Two priests vainly interposed; the one was slain, the other left for dead. The assassins mutilated the body and dragged it to the church-door, where they mounted their horses and rode away. The church excommunicated them, but they were never brought to justice.

The king of the Romans did not long survive his son; he died of paralysis in the April of the following year (1272), and seven months after he was followed to the

tomb by the king his brother. He fell sick at Bury St. Edmund's, and being conveyed to Westminster expired there on the 20th of November, in the sixty-fourth year of his age and the fifty-sixth of his reign.

To draw a character of so feeble a prince as Henry III. would be mere waste of time. He had not energy enough to be either good or bad in any eminent degree. As a private person he might have gone happy and blameless through life; seated on a throne he was an object of contempt.

The trial by ordeal was abolished in the early part of the reign of Henry III. As a substitute, the trial by jury was offered in all cases, criminal as well as civil.

It was at the council of Merton, in the twentieth year of this king, that the earls and barons made their famous reply, *Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari*. The occasion was the question of the bastardy of children born before marriage. The common law regarded all such children as illegitimate, while the canon and civil laws held them to be legitimated by the act of marriage; hence the lay and ecclesiastical courts were frequently at variance. As the church was at this time making every effort to obtain the superiority for the canon law, the prelates sought of the great council to cause their law to decide in this matter. They received the above memorable reply indicative of that determination to resist the encroachments of the church, which was henceforth to gather strength every day.

CHAPTER V.

EDWARD I. (LONGSHANKS.)*

1272—1307.

Edward in the East.—Petty battle of Chalons.—Reduction of Wales.—Affairs of Scotland.—Loss of Guienne.—Battle of Dunbar.—William Wallace.—Battle of Stirling.—Battle of Falkirk.—Reduction of Scotland.—Robert Bruce.—Death and character of Edward.—State of the constitution.

EDWARD was in the Holy Land when the death of his father gave him the crown of England. Acre was all that there remained to the Christians, and the small force of one thousand men which the English prince had brought could avail but little to effect its security. Yet during the eighteen months that he remained in the East he upheld the fame of the blood of the lion-hearted Richard, and at his departure (1272) he procured for those whom he had come to aid a ten-years' truce from the Sultan of Egypt. The fall of Acre however was only delayed; it opened its gates in 1291 to a Moslem conqueror, and the Christian dominion in the East expired.

During his abode in Acre Edward nearly lost his life by teachery. The emir of Jaffa pretending a desire to embrace Christianity had gained his confidence, and messages passed between them. The Moslem envoy was one day admitted alone into the room in which Edward was lying on a couch during the heat of the day. Finding the long-sought occasion arrived, he drew a dagger, and made a blow at the prince's heart. Edward received the stroke on his arm, rose, cast the assassin to the ground and despatched him with his own weapon. But the dagger was

* Authorities :—Same as before (excepting Paris) and Walsingham, Langtoft and Fordun.


supposed to have been poisoned, for the wound assumed a dangerous appearance. The prince made his will and calmly prepared for death; the skill however of his English surgeon, aided by the strength of a good constitution, effected a cure, and he was completely recovered at the end of three weeks. To make the story more romantic, a Spanish writer adds that Edward's faithful spouse Eleanor, at the risk of her life, extracted the poison from the wound with her lips.

At Messina, on his way home, Edward learned the death of his father. On the invitation of the pope he visited Rome (1273); the greatest honours were shown him there, and wherever he passed through Italy and Savoy. He proceeded to Paris, and did homage to Philip the fair for his continental dominions. As there were some disturbances in Guienne, he deemed it right to settle them before he went to England. This caused him a delay of an entire year, during which time he ran a great risk of losing his life by treachery, as it was said. The count of Chalons being about to hold a tournament, sent a challenge to the king of England to appear at it. The pontiff, who was then at Lyons, wrote to dissuade him from accepting it, asserting that treachery was meant. Edward's chivalrous spirit however would not suffer him to decline. He appeared on the appointed day with one thousand men, horse and foot; the count's array, it is said, displayed double the number. The tournament began; it was at first conducted with the usual courtesy, but it soon presented the appearance of a mortal conflict. Edward himself overthrew the count and made him his captive, and the 'Petty Battle of Chalons,' as it was named, terminated in favour of the English.

After regulating some commercial differences with the countess of Flanders, Edward at length (Aug. 2) embarked for England, where he was received with the utmost joy, and shortly after (19th) he and his queen were crowned at

Westminster. The king was now in the thirty-sixth year of his age; with a high and well-merited reputation for all the civil and military virtues; he possessed the respect and affections of his subjects; his realms were peaceful and prosperous. A field for his ambition to display itself would naturally present itself somewhere, and chance determined for the project of uniting the whole island of Britain under one sceptre, instead of wasting like his predecessors the national energies in contests with France. Wales first and then Scotland were attacked by his arts and his arms.

Llewellyn prince of Wales had, as we have seen, taken an active part on the side of the barons in the late civil wars. He had however after the battle of Evesham renewed his fealty to king Henry, but when summoned on that monarch's death to swear it to his successor he had refused. After the return of Edward Llewellyn was thrice summoned to appear and do homage to the English crown, but he declined under the pretext of his life not being safe in England. It would appear that he still kept up an intercourse with the Montfort family, for he was betrothed to their sister Eleanor; but this lady on her passage from France to Wales was taken by an English vessel and was detained by orders of the king. Edward having assembled an army, advanced (1276) to the frontiers of Wales; he there offered Llewellyn a safe-conduct, but the Welshman insisted on the liberation of his affianced bride, and the delivery of the king's son as a hostage for his safety. He was then as contumacious pronounced a rebel by parliament, and a subsidy of a fifteenth was granted for the war against him. To add to the embarrassment of Llewellyn, his own brother David, whom he had deprived of his patrimony, was active in the English interest, and Rees of Meredith, the head of a rival family, took the same side. Edward having assembled his forces the following midsummer (1277), crossed the Dee in Cheshire, and marching along




the coast made himself master of Anglesea. As his fleet commanded the sea, the Welsh were cooped up in the barren region of Snowdon, and famine soon obliged Llewellyn to submit. He agreed to pay 50,000*l.* for the expenses of the war, to cede the country from the Conway to Chester, to hold Anglesea as a fief of the English crown, to give ten hostages, and to do homage. The king shortly after remitted the fine, restored the hostages, and gave his consent to the marriage of Llewellyn with Eleanor de Montfort.

Edward retired, deeming the subjugation of Wales now complete. But the insolence of the English on the one side, and the rooted antipathy of the Welsh to the strangers on the other, soon disturbed the tranquillity. The people of the ceded districts could not endure the introduction of English law; deeming it, for example, a great hardship that the justiciary should hang those who committed murder, when they had offered to pay the fine imposed in such cases by Welsh law. A prophecy ascribed to Merlin also excited their minds at this time. This ancient Cymric seer had, it seems, foretold that when English money became round a prince of Wales would be crowned at London; and as Edward had lately issued a new and circular coinage, and forbidden the penny to be cut any more into halfpence and farthings, they deemed the time of Welsh dominion to be arrived.

The insurrection was commenced by prince David, who, on the night of Palm Sunday (1282), amid the uproar of a tempest, surprised the castle of Hawarden, in which the justiciary De Clifford resided, and put all in it to death except De Clifford, who was conveyed a captive to Snowdon. This was the signal for a general rising; the Welsh everywhere poured down on the marches, and Llewellyn came and laid siege to the castles of Flint and Rhuddlan. Edward lost no time in collecting troops; he raised his standard at Worcester, and thence advanced to the relief of his fortresses. Having constructed a bridge of boats on the Menai broad

enough to allow forty men to march abreast, he passed his army over and reduced Anglesea. He then sent a body of troops back to the main land to observe the enemy. But on the sudden appearance of the Welsh, they took fright, and fled back to the shore. The tide had now divided the bridge, and most of them perished in attempting to escape by the boats. As the English were assembling troops on the southern frontier, Llewellyn now hastened to defend the passage of the Wye. Here one day (Dec. 11) as he was reposing in a barn on a hill near the bridge, which was held by his people, he was awaked by a loud shout, and the English, who had passed by a ford, were seen ascending the hill. A knight named Adam Frankton came by chance to the barn, and Llewellyn though unarmed engaged him, but was run through the body by his spear and slain. After the defeat of the Welsh Frankton returned to the barn, and it was only then that the quality of the slain was discovered. Llewellyn's head was cut off and sent to Edward, by whose orders it was fixed on the Tower of London encircled with ivy, or as some said, silver, in ridicule of Merlin's prophecy.

When Llewellyn's death was known most of the Welsh chiefs hastened to make their submission. David alone, despairing of pardon, or it may be actuated by a generous love of independence, still held out. But his treacherous countrymen hunted him for six months through the mountains, and at length (1283) captured him and his family. He was brought in chains to Edward; a parliament was assembled at Shrewsbury to try him; and he was sentenced (Sept. 30) "to be drawn to the gallows as a traitor to the king who had made him a knight; to be hanged as the murderer of the gentlemen taken in the castle of Hawarden; to have his bowels burnt because he had profaned by assassination the solemnity of Christ's passion; and to have his quarters dispersed through the country because he had in different places compassed the death of his lord the king."



This sentence, perhaps the earliest instance of what became the usual punishment for treason, was literally executed, and David's head was placed beside that of his brother on the Tower.

Edward spent more than a year in Wales to regulate the country. He divided it like England into counties and hundreds, and formed corporations in the towns. He strengthened the castles at Conway and Caernarvon, and gave the adjoining lands to English barons; but he left all the remaining lands in the hands of their original proprietors. By accident or design the queen was at this time delivered of a son at Caernarvon, whom the politic Edward, to the great joy of his new subjects, declared to be prince of Wales; and as this prince soon after, by the death of his elder brother, became heir to the crown, the title of Prince of Wales has ever since been that of the heir-apparent to the throne of England.


Tradition told, that fearing lest the bards who flourished in Wales as in all Celtic countries should by their patriotic strains again awaken in the breasts of the people the love of independence, Edward assembled all these sons of song, and then barbarously put them to death; hoping, as the poet says, "to quench the (poetic) orb of day" in this "sanguine cloud." But such an act was totally repugnant to the character of Edward, and the charge is unsupported by a single particle of historic evidence.

The following year (1285) was devoted by Edward to the labours of legislation, and the three succeeding years were spent on the continent, where the fame of his justice and wisdom had caused him to be chosen arbitrator between the royal houses of France and Aragon. On his return, the affairs of Scotland attracted his attention and gave him employment for the remainder of his reign.

In the year 1286, Alexander III. of Scotland died by a fall from his horse. His children by his queen Margaret, the sister of Edward, having all died before him, the succes-

sion came to the 'Maid of Norway,' as the infant daughter of Eric king of Norway by Margaret the daughter of the Scottish king was named. Edward proposed a marriage between the young queen and his eldest son; her father and the states of Scotland gave a ready consent, the pope granted a dispensation, and the princess embarked for Scotland. Unfortunately she fell sick on the voyage, and she breathed her last on one of the Orkney isles (1290). Immediately no less than thirteen claimants of the throne appeared; but as it was manifest that only the descendants of David earl of Huntingdon, brother of William the Lion, could have a right, and as this prince had had none but daughters, the claim could only lie among their descendants. John Baliol lord of Galloway was the grandson of the eldest daughter, Robert Bruce earl of Carrick and lord of Annandale the son of the second, John Hastings lord of Abergavenny the grandson of the third. This last it is evident had but little claim, and the question (a dubious one in that age) was whether the more remote representative of the elder, or the nearer of the second sister, was the heir. To avoid an appeal to arms it was determined by the nobles that the decision should be referred to the king of England, whose reputation for wisdom and justice stood so high, and of whose right to decide as feudal superior of the realm they were probably conscious (1291).


Edward readily accepted the office of arbitrator; he advanced with a large army to the frontiers, and summoned the Scottish parliament to meet him at the castle of Norham on the southern bank of the Tweed. The Scots assembled on the opposite bank, and on the appointed day their states appeared in the church of Norham, where they were addressed by Brabazon the English justiciary, who required them as a preliminary act to acknowledge Edward as their feudal superior. They hesitated. "By holy Edward, whose crown I wear," cried the king, "I will have my rights or die in the assertion of them." They craved a delay of three



weeks in order to consult those prelates and barons who were still absent. The delay was granted ; at the same time an instrument containing various historical proofs of the king's claim was delivered to them, and they were required to state their objections, if any, to it. On the 2nd of June the bishop of Bath, the chancellor, passed over to the Scottish side of the river, and stated that as no opposition had been made to the king's claim he would proceed to decide. He then asked Robert Bruce if he was willing to abide by the decision of Edward as sovereign lord of Scotland. He replied in the affirmative ; the other competitors did the same. Baliol was absent, (probably on purpose,) but next morning he gave his consent, though it is said with reluctance. They all then passed over, and met king Edward in the church of Norham, where they signed an instrument to that effect. It was resolved that they should exhibit their claims before a council of forty Scots chosen by Baliol and his kinsman Comyn, forty more chosen by Bruce, and twenty-four English named by king Edward, who also required that all the fortresses of Scotland should be put into his hands, and the military tenants of the crown swear fealty to him that he might be enabled to carry into effect the decision of the council. Edward then went southwards, leaving the council to sit at Berwick. At the expiration of a year (June 2, 1292) he returned to hear their decision. But as they had not yet determined he directed them first to examine the claims of Bruce and Baliol, and then to dispose of those of the others. When they made their report, the king laid it before the united parliament of the two nations, who decided in favour of Baliol. Bruce and Hastings then required that the kingdom should be divided ; this proposal, though so manifestly for his interest, Edward rejected ; and (Nov. 17) he pronounced judgement in favour of Baliol, to whom, on his swearing fealty in the fullest terms, he restored the royal castles, and gave complete possession of the kingdom.

If we except an apparent want of generosity in taking advantage of the confidence of the Scottish nation to exact a formal recognition of his feudal superiority, there is certainly little to blame in the conduct of Edward throughout this transaction. An unworthy motive, probably without justice, has been ascribed to his subsequent behaviour. By the feudal law an appeal lay from the sentence of an immediate lord to the court of the common superior; and as duke of Aquitaine Edward had himself been often thus cited before the court of France. Appeals were accordingly made (1293) by Macduff earl of Fife and others from the sentence of Baliol to the king of England. Baliol when summoned to appear and answer the charge of Macduff took no notice of the summons; when cited a second time he appeared in person, and not by attorney as he might have done, and sentence was given against him; and for his contempt of the authority of his liege lord, it was adjudged that three of his castles with their royalties should be sequestered. Baliol asked time to consult his subjects; the request was granted; and when the time he had required was expired, adjournment after adjournment was made.

While Edward was thus exercising his feudal superiority over Scotland, he became himself the object of a similar claim from the king of France:—the occasion was as follows. The crews of a Norman and an English ship having gone ashore to water at the same place, a quarrel arose in which a Norman was slain. The Normans in revenge attacked the first English ship they met, took out of it a merchant of Bayonne, and hanged him with a dog at his feet out of their yards. Retaliation followed; the English were joined by the Irish and Dutch, the Normans by the French and Genoese mariners. Neither sovereign interfered. At length a Norman fleet of two hundred sail having pillaged the coast of Gascony, put into a port of Brittany, where they were discovered by a fleet of eighty




ships belonging to Portsmouth and the Cinque Ports. The English challenged them to come out; the challenge was accepted, and a bloody engagement ended in favour of the English, who captured the entire hostile fleet. The king of France now summoned Edward as duke of Guienne to appear before the court at Paris, and answer for the various offences alleged to have been committed by his vassals of Guienne against the subjects of his liege lord. Edward sent the bishop of London to offer compensation to those injured, provided the like was made to the English. This being refused, he offered to refer the matter to arbitrators or to the pope. Finally he sent to Paris his brother Edmund, who was married to the mother of the French queen. Edmund was assured by the two queens that as Philip merely wanted to vindicate his honour, he only required that Edward should resign Guienne to him for forty days, at the end of which time he pledged himself to restore it. Edward gave his consent; a treaty to this effect was executed (1294); the citation against him was withdrawn; and possession of Guienne was given to the officers of Philip. At the end of the forty days Edmund applied to Philip for the performance of his promise; he was put off for some days, and when he renewed his application, he met with a positive refusal; and though the citation had been withdrawn, sentence of forfeiture for non-appearance was passed against Edward.

It seems strange that so politic a prince as Edward should thus allow himself to be swindled out of one of his fairest possessions. It is indeed said by some that his eagerness to make himself master of Scotland rendered him careless of Guienne; but there is no clear proof of his having any designs on Scotland at this time, and a more probable reason is assigned by those who say that there was a treaty of marriage on foot between him, he being now a widower, and the sister of Philip, and that he wished Gui-

enne to be settled on his issue by that princess ; for which purpose it was necessary to surrender it to the superior lord in order that an enfeoffment to that effect might be executed.

Edward was not a man to submit tamely to such a flagrant injustice. He raised money, collected an army, sent to excuse himself to his Gascon vassals for having given them up, and formally renounced his allegiance to Philip. But adverse winds detained him for seven weeks at Portsmouth, during which time the Welsh, thinking he was gone, rose in arms, slaughtered the English who were in their country, and ravaged the marches. The king went in person against them and speedily reduced them to obedience. Their leaders were sentenced to confinement during pleasure in different castles, and their estates given to their heirs. Henceforth Wales remained peaceable and quiet.

Edward was again about to set forth to recover his continental dominions, when he received information that the Scots, impatient of his yoke, had concluded an alliance with the king of France, and that a match had been contracted between Philip's niece and Baliol's eldest son. The Scots moreover, as they distrusted the timid temper of their king, had given him a council of four bishops, four earls, and four barons, in whose hands the government now really lay. This intelligence determined Edward not to quit England ; he sent his brother Edmund with some troops to Guienne, and then to put Baliol to the test, he required him as his vassal to aid him in the recovery of that province ; he next demanded that the castles of Jedburgh, Roxburgh, and Berwick should be put into his hands by way of security ; and finally summoned him to appear before him at Newcastle-upon-Tyne the following March. None of these demands being complied with, Edward advanced to Newcastle (Mar. 1296) at the head of thirty thousand foot and four thousand horse. The Scots, who had concealed their king in the Highlands, prepared for defence. To draw



away king Edward they made an inroad into Cumberland, but regardless of them, he crossed the Tweed at Coldstream, and sat down before Berwick, which was carried by assault the next day and its garrison of seven thousand men put to the sword. Warrenne earl of Surrey was then sent with a large force to besiege the castle of Dunbar, whose garrison agreed to surrender if not relieved within three days. On the third day (Apr. 27) the Scottish army of forty thousand foot and five thousand horse appeared on the hills beyond the town. Warrenne fell back a little to prepare for battle. A cry of "They run!" rose in the Scottish lines, and the whole army precipitately poured down into the valley to destroy the fugitives; but here they encountered the firm close-set lines of an English army. The conflict was short; the Scots fled on all sides, leaving ten thousand of their number dead on the field. Scotland was conquered in this battle. Dunbar, Jedburgh, Roxburgh, Edinburgh, and Stirling opened their gates. Baliol came in person to Kincardin (July 2), and made a formal surrender of his kingdom. Edward advanced as far as Elgin without meeting any resistance. He then returned to Berwick, where having held a parliament, and received the homage of the Scottish nation, he retired, leaving earl Warrenne guardian of the kingdom. The principal offices of state were given to Englishmen, and the more potent Scottish nobles were obliged to come and reside south of the Trent. Edward carried away with him the regalia and the fatal stone-chair at the abbey of Scone, in which the Scottish kings were wont to be crowned, and which was regarded as the palladium of the kingdom; he deposited it in Westminster abbey. It is also said, but without any evidence whatever, that he ordered all the records which contained proofs of Scottish independence to be destroyed.

Baliol was assigned the Tower of London for a residence, and he was allowed the full range of a circuit of twenty

miles round London. At the end of three years he obtained permission to retire to his estates in Normandy, where he spent the remaining six years of his life, more happy probably than when ruling over the turbulent Scots.

While Edward was engaged in Scotland, the whole of Guienne, except Bayonne, fell into the hands of the French prince. Edmund died soon after his arrival, and the earl of Lincoln took the command. The king, on his return from Scotland, made vigorous preparations for the war with France. His plan was to attack it on the side of Flanders, and with this design he had formed alliances with the emperor, the earl of Flanders and other princes. He also intended to continue operations in Guienne, and he proposed putting the forces destined for that province under the constable Humphrey Bohun earl of Hereford, and the marshal Roger Bigod earl of Norfolk. But to his surprise, these nobles positively refused, alleging that their office only obliged them to attend his person in the wars. "By God, sir earl," cried the enraged monarch to the constable, "you shall either go or hang." "By God, sir king," replied the undaunted earl, "I will neither go nor hang." They then retired from court with about thirty of the barons, and as they refused to execute their office in mustering troops, the king appointed a temporary marshal and constable for the purpose. As we shall return to the subject, we will here only observe that the two earls were not disloyal to their sovereign on this occasion; they only wished to set bounds to the arbitrary conduct which he had strongly displayed in his mode of raising money for his intended expedition.

At length the king crossed the sea with a large army, but no action of any importance took place. A truce for two years was concluded, and finally through the mediation of the pope a peace was made; the French king restoring Guienne to Edward, who himself married that monarch's

sister Margaret, and affianced the prince of Wales to his daughter Isabella.

While Edward was absent in Flanders (1297), an insurrection against his authority broke out in Scotland. Earl Warrenne being obliged to return to England, on account of his health, left the direction of affairs to Ormesby the justiciary, and Cressingham the treasurer; the former was a harsh austere man, the latter was an ecclesiastic deeply infected with avarice. By these men the Scots were made to feel keenly their national degradation: several gentlemen were outlawed or imprisoned for refusing or delaying to take the oath of allegiance. We need no proof that the subordinate English agents faithfully imitated the insolence of their superiors. One of these officers having offered an affront to William Wallace, a gentleman of small fortune in the West of Scotland, the latter, who was a man of gigantic stature and great strength and courage, struck him dead on the spot. Knowing then that he had no mercy to expect, Wallace fled to the woods, the retreat of those who feared punishment for their patriotism or their crimes. His superior powers of mind and body soon raised him to command, and he carried on with great ability and success, a *guerilla*-warfare (as it is now named) against the English and their adherents. In concert with sir William Douglas, another leader of outlaws, he made a bold attempt to surprise the justiciary at Scone; but Ormesby having had timely notice, fled into England. Many of the other English officers followed his example: the Scots rose in various parts and massacred such of the English as fell into their hands. The fame of Wallace and Douglas increased every day, and they were joined at length by the bishop of Glasgow, the steward of Scotland, sir Alexander Lindsey, sir Andrew Moray, sir Richard Lunding, and other chiefs. The young earl of Carrick* hesi-

* Bruce, the claimant of the throne, died in 1296; his son was at this time with Edward. This was his grandson.

tated how to act. At first he went to Carlisle when summoned, and renewed his fealty ; then he changed and tried to raise Annandale, and he finally repaired with his own retainers to the camp of the patriots.

But meantime earl Warrenne had by Edward's orders called out the forces of the six northern counties, and two English armies entered Scotland. At Irvine (July 9) one of them, led by Warrenne's nephew Henry Percy, came up with the Scottish forces. As dissensions had broken out among the patriotic chiefs, and they feared the result of a battle, they all, with the exception of Wallace and Moray, hastened to make their submission and obtain their pardon. These last two chiefs moved northwards with the greater part of the forces, and they were joined by the tenantry of several noblemen secretly encouraged by their lords. Warrenne advanced with a large army to Stirling, near which Wallace lay with forty thousand men, at a place called Cambuskenneth on the opposite side of the Forth, over which river there was only one bridge, of wood, and merely broad enough to allow two men to go abreast. Lundin, who was now with Warrenne, strongly advised him not to attempt this passage in the face of an enemy ; but the earl, urged by the impetuous Cressingham, took no heed of the admonition. Led by Cressingham and sir Marmaduke Twinge, the English began to cross the bridge (Sept. 11). Wallace waited patiently on the hills where he lay till about five thousand men were over, and then having sent round a part of his force to secure the head of the bridge, he gave orders to pour down on them ; and the whole were speedily slaughtered in the presence of their leader, who could give them no aid. Cressingham was among the slain, and the vindictive Scots, it is said, flayed his body and made thongs for their horses out of the skin. Warrenne lost no time in making his retreat into England and toward winter Wallace and Moray crossed the bor-

ders and ravaged the northern counties during an entire month.


Wallace was made "Guardian of the Kingdom and General of the Armies of Scotland," under which title he summoned a parliament to Perth. But the sun of his glory was soon to set. Edward, who had returned, was now (1298) on his way to Scotland, and when he joined earl Warrenne at Berwick he found himself at the head of seven thousand horse and eighty thousand foot, chiefly Welsh and Irish. He advanced to the Forth; want of provisions forced him to fall back; and hearing that Wallace lay with his army in the forest of Falkirk, in order to harass him in his retreat, he moved in that direction. Having halted for the night on the moor of Linlithgow, the English on advancing next morning (July 22) found the enemy posted behind a morass. Wallace had drawn up his pikemen in four circular masses, called Schiltrons, connected by lines of archers from the forest of Selkirk. He had stationed his cavalry in the rear. Having made this judicious arrangement, he cried, "I haif brocht you to the king*, hop [dance] gif ye can." One division of the English got entangled in the morass; a second led by the bishop of Durham went round it; the prelate then ordered his men to halt till the other divisions came up. "To thy mass, bishop!" cried a knight, and dashed on against the Scottish cavalry, who fled at the first charge. The line of archers was speedily broken, but the pikemen stood firm, till the English archers and the military engines having played on them, and openings being effected in their circles, the horse rushed in and cut the brave Scots to pieces. The loss of the Scots is variously stated at from fifteen to fifty thousand men. Wallace escaped, but he could only resume his former predatory courses.

After his victory Edward traversed the country in all

* Walsingham. Langtoft says, "to the renge [ring]."

directions without meeting any resistance. Want of provisions however soon obliged him to retire, and Galloway and all the country north of the firths remained in the hands of the Scots, whose affairs were now guided by the bishop of St. Andrews, Bruce earl of Carrick, John Comyn, and John de Soulis acting as regents in the name of John Baliol (1299). They laid siege to the castle of Stirling, which not being relieved by Edward, was forced to surrender.

The Scots had applied to pope Boniface VIII. to interfere in their behalf, and in the course of this summer the pontiff wrote a letter to Edward, in which, after asserting that Scotland belonged in full right to the Roman see, he proceeded to detail the proofs of its independence of the English crown, with which the Scots had furnished him; and concluded by boldly reserving to his own decision every point at issue between the king of England and the king or people of Scotland. This bull was so long delayed that it did not reach Edward till after his return from Scotland in the following summer (1300). A truce, at the desire of the king of France, having been concluded with the Scots, a parliament met (Feb. 1301) to take it into consideration. This assembly in the strongest and most emphatic terms, denied the right of the pope to interfere in the temporal concerns of the crown of England, and declared that they would not suffer the king, even if so inclined, to yield to any of those pretensions contained in the pontiff's letter; for whose satisfaction as a friend, however, though not as a judge, a long reply to that letter was drawn up. In this reply, the fabulous pages of Geoffrey of Monmouth and his story of Brute the Trojan, were treated as real history, and quoted as authority. The Anglo-Saxon and Norman periods were then gone through, and every instance of homage done by Scottish princes was enumerated. This reply when sent to Rome was given by the pope to the Scottish agent, and by him transmitted



to the regency, who were not slow to frame a counter-statement. Here the mythic history of Ireland was opposed to that of England; the Saxon history was set aside, as Edward being a Norman could not claim from the Saxons; the Norman instances were denied; Edward's refusal to submit to the decision of the pontiff was ascribed to his sense of the weakness of his cause; and it was asserted that Scotland is the peculiar property of the Holy See, Constantine having bestowed on it all the isles of the West.

Whatever might be the strength or justice of the Scottish arguments, Edward set them at nought. Having concluded a peace with the king of France, he prepared for the final reduction of Scotland. In the spring of 1303, John de Segrave, whom he had made governor of that kingdom, set out by his orders with about twenty thousand men for Edinburgh. He led his forces without much precaution, and on coming to Rosslyn, he divided them into three parts, each of which encamped separately. Early next morning (Feb. 24), the first division, under Segrave himself, was fallen on before they were up by a body of eight thousand Scottish horse, led by Comyn the governor and sir Simon Fraser, and was completely routed, Segrave himself being made a prisoner. The second division now came up; the Scots having previously put their prisoners to death, fell on and routed *it* also. The third division now appeared; again the prisoners were massacred, and again the English were defeated.

This success raised the hopes of the Scots; but ere long the king appeared with a force which it were folly to resist. They hoped to defeat him like Warrenne at the bridge of Forth, but he crossed that river by a ford. The castle of Brechin alone resisted; he traversed the whole North of Scotland, and then took up his residence for the winter in the abbey of Dunfermline. Hither repaired Comyn the guardian and the other nobles, and (Feb. 9, 1304) a treaty

was concluded, securing them in their lives and estates, subject to such fines as parliament should impose. Some of the more turbulent or influential were required to leave the kingdom for different periods. Wallace was invited to submit with the rest*; but actuated by patriotism or some less worthy motive, he preferred the life of an outlaw. Stirling castle, strong by its position on a rock, still held out, and Edward was obliged to invest it in person. After a brave resistance of three months, a surrender was agreed on, and Oliphant the governor and twenty-five of the garrison came down, as was the custom in such cases, barefoot, in their shirts, with halters about their necks. Edward advanced to meet them; they fell on their knees and implored his favour. "I have none for you," said the king; "you must surrender at discretion." They assented. "Then," said he, "you shall be hanged as traitors." "Sir," said Oliphant, "we own our guilt, our lives are at your mercy." The rest also declared themselves guilty, and sued for mercy. The king turned aside, and it is said dropped a tear; he then ordered them to be conducted into England, but not in chains. A few months after Wallace was betrayed by his servant to sir John Monteith. He was brought up to London, where he was arraigned for murder, robbery, and treason. To the two first charges he pleaded guilty, but he denied that he was a traitor, as he had never sworn fealty to Edward. He was found guilty and executed: his head was placed on the Tower; his four quarters were sent to different parts of Scotland for a similar exposure†.

The following year (1305), Edward, after consulting with Wishart bishop of Glasgow, Robert Bruce, and John Mowbray, all Scots and asserters of Scottish independence,

* "Et quant à monsieur Guiliam de Galeys est accordé, qu'il se mette en la volonté et en la grâce nostre seigneur le Roy si lui semble que bon soit."—Ryley 370.

† See Appendix (P).

prepared to draw up a plan for the government of Scotland. By this the places of trust were to be put into the hands of natives and Englishmen conjointly; the laws of Scotland were to continue of force; and an amnesty was passed on condition of fines being paid, which however were to be spent in Scotland for the benefit of the kingdom (Oct. 15).

Edward now deemed that he had secured his dominion over Scotland, but never was an expectation more fallacious; for four months were hardly passed, when Scotland was again in insurrection. Baliol being now dead and his son a captive in the Tower, the task of maintaining the rights of the family had fallen to his nephew, John Comyn of Badenoch, whom we therefore have seen of late years acting as head of the nation. Robert Bruce, the grandson of Baliol's competitor, a young man about twenty-three years of age, was now the head of the rival house. These two noblemen having repaired to Dumfries, on what account is not certainly known, Bruce* (Feb. 10, 1306) requested Comyn to give him a private meeting in the choir of the church of the Minorites. They met; what their discourse was remains unknown; high words arose, and Bruce drew his dagger and plunged it into Comyn's bosom. Comyn fell; Bruce hurried out of the church pale and agitated. "I think I have killed Comyn," said he to his friends whom he met without. "You only think so!" cried sir Thomas Kirkpatrick; "I will secure him;" and he and the rest rushed into the church. Seaton, Bruce's brother-in-law, there slew Comyn's uncle, who had hastened to the spot, and Comyn himself, who was still alive, was despatched by Kirkpatrick.


After this daring deed, Bruce, despairing of pardon, assumed the title of king. The people favoured his pretensions, and he was crowned (Mar. 27) at Scone. But ere long the English forces poured into Scotland, where they

* See Appendix (Q).

were joined by the adherents of Comyn ; and Bruce being defeated (June 24) at Methven near Perth, became a wanderer in Athol and Breadalbane. His little band was again dispersed ; and having made his way to the coast he sought refuge in the isle of Rathlin on the coast of Ireland, where he remained concealed for the winter. King Edward, though broken by age and disease, had resolved to avenge the murder of Comyn. He knighted the prince of Wales and a number of the young nobility. At the banquet held on this occasion, he vowed before God, and the swans which according to usage were placed on the table, to punish the Scottish rebels : and he prayed the company, if he died, not to let him be buried till his son had performed his vow. The prince and nobles also swore, and the king then set out for Carlisle, where he issued orders for the trial of such of Bruce's adherents as had been made prisoners ; and the earl of Athol and some others were executed as traitors.

In the spring (1307) Bruce re-appeared and gained some advantages. The king finding his health somewhat improved assembled a large army at Carlisle and put himself at its head to enter Scotland ; but he had only gone five miles to a place named Burgh-on-the-Sands, when the violence of his disorder obliged him to stop, and the next day (July 7) he breathed his last, in the sixty-ninth year of his age and the thirty-fifth of his reign.

It has justly been said of this great monarch, that he "is the model of a politic and warlike king." In person, though his limbs were too long and slender (whence his name of Longshanks), he was imposing and handsome ; he was skilled in all martial exercises ; his courage was undoubted ; his manners were courteous and affable. Though arbitrary in temper he was a lover of justice, and the money which he raised by his sole authority from his people was employed with frugality for national objects. In a word, there was in him much to admire, and considering his times,



little to condemn ; for the maxims of feudal law justified in a great measure his conduct toward Wales and Scotland. We may perhaps venture to style him the greatest of the house of Plantaganet.

By his first queen Eleanor of Castile, whom he tenderly loved, Edward had four sons and eleven daughters, of whom only one son, Edward, and four daughters, survived him ; by Margaret of France he had two sons, Thomas earl of Norfolk and earl marshal, and Edmund earl of Kent, and one daughter who died before him.

In a legal and constitutional point of view the reign of Edward I. is one of the most important in our history, in which it on this account forms an epoch. The 'Confirmation of the Charters,' of which the following is the history, was the great constitutional measure of his reign.

Edward, as we have said, though he spent it frugally, exacted his subjects' money arbitrarily. He leaned very heavily on the church. The reigning pontiff, the ambitious Boniface VIII., had, at the desire, it is said, of the clergy, issued a bull menacing with excommunication any prince who taxed the church without his consent. When therefore the king on the occasion of his war with France in 1296, demanded of the clergy a fifth of their moveables, they pleaded the bull, and the primate Winchelsea told him that they owed obedience to two masters, of which the spiritual was the greater. The king, instead of applying to the pope in the usual manner, told them, that as they would not support the government they were not worthy of its protection, and he forthwith outlawed them, and took possession of all their goods and chattels. They now were robbed, plundered and abused by every ruffian that chose to do so, and the law would give them no redress. They gradually therefore made their peace with the king, yielding to all his demands.

These supplies however and those granted by parlia-

ment not sufficing, he proceeded to seize the wool and leather in the hands of the merchants, to force the counties to supply him with corn and cattle (for all which, indeed, he promised payment at a future day), and finally required the personal service of every holder of land, to the value of 20*l.* a year. It was then that the constable and marshal made the bold stand against him above narrated; finding that they were supported by the nobility, he sought to make a peace with the church, and he appointed the primate one of the tutors of his son whom he was leaving guardian of the realm. He even condescended to apologise publicly to the people for his exactions, ascribing them to necessity, and promising amendment. The two earls did not then venture any further than to draw up a remonstrance against his violations of the Charters, which was presented to him as he was embarking at Winchelsea, and to which he gave an evasive reply. But when he was gone, they came up to parliament, when summoned, with a large body of both horse and foot, and refused to enter the city till the gates were committed to their custody. The primate, who was secretly in their interest, advised the council to comply, and they thus became masters of the prince and parliament. Their demands however were most moderate; they only required that the Charters should be solemnly confirmed, a clause be added securing the nation for ever against taxation without consent of parliament, and pardon to themselves for their refusal to attend the king. The prince and his council assented to these terms; they were sent over to the king, who, after some delay and with great reluctance, gave them his confirmation. On his return, the earls insisted that he should confirm them anew; and after evincing great repugnance, and having recourse to every subterfuge, he was obliged to yield. He afterwards obtained from the pope a dispensation from his oaths; but the spirit of the people was too strong for him or the papal bull; the Great Charter was thus finally and

firmly established, and the important right of being the only legitimate raisers of the supplies was gained for the people. The names of Humphrey Bohun and Roger Bigod must ever rank among those of England's most illustrious patriots. In defence of the rights of the people they withstood and overcame the most able and energetic of her monarchs.

The present constitution of parliament was fully established in this reign, Edward finding it more for his interest in general to let his people tax themselves, and grant a *subsidy* as it was now termed, than to employ the old mode of tallaging; not but that he still had recourse to that arbitrary mode of raising supplies till the 'Confirmation of the Charters' was wrung from him. Scutage also now went out of use, the tenants in chief paying a subsidy like the citizens and clergy.

The improvements in the law which were made in his reign have obtained for Edward the title of the English Justinian. The limits of the jurisdiction of the several courts of law were fixed; the itinerant justices were directed to hold assizes thrice a year in each county. By the celebrated statute of Winchester effectual provisions were made for the public security. It enacts that every host shall be answerable for his guests; that the gates of towns shall be kept locked from sunset to sunrise; that when a robbery is committed the hue and cry shall be made after the felon, and every man be ready to follow it armed; the hundred to be answerable for the damage if the robber is not taken. For greater security to travellers, the trees and underwood were to be cleared away for a space of two hundred feet on each side of the highway. Officers named 'Conservators' were appointed to carry these provisions into effect, whose powers were gradually extended, and their title changed to that of 'Justices of Peace.'

The statute of *entails*, which so mainly contributes to keep up the wealth and influence of the nobility, and to

prevent the division or alienation of landed property, which is so detrimental to the interests of an aristocracy, is also to be referred to this reign. To check the clergy in their schemes for the acquisition of land, Edward caused to be passed the statute of *mortmain*; this however they contrived to elude by what were called *uses*: but the ingenuity of the common law lawyers equalled theirs; each new device was met by an appropriate remedy, and the law finally triumphed over the church.

It is remarkable that Edward, who was so little of a bigot in general, showed himself a fanatic with respect to the Jews. As we have seen, one of the consequences of the Conquest had been the establishment of this people in England, where they followed their usual trade of lending money, and were also the importers of the rare and precious commodities of distant countries. Their rate of interest was enormous, owing to the insecurity of payment; the church had infused a prejudice against lending at all on interest; and the Jews on this account, and as the enemies of Christ, were objects of hatred to the people. But the crown protected them, though it made them pay dear for its favour.

In 1287 Edward threw the whole of them into prison till they paid a sum of 12,000*l.*; and in 1290, he confiscated their property and banished them the kingdom*.

* They did not reappear in England till the time of the Commonwealth.

CHAPTER VI.

EDWARD II. (OF CAERNARVON.) *

1307—1327.

Piers Gaveston.—Battle of Bannockburn.—Hugh Spenser.—Execution of the earl of Lancaster.—Hostile conduct of the queen.—Execution of the Spencers.—Deposition and murder of the king.


EDWARD II. was twenty-three years of age when he succeeded to the throne. He was handsome in person and amiable in temper ; but he was weak in mind and fond of pleasure—in all things the opposite of his illustrious sire. He was exceedingly attached to a young man of his own age named Piers Gaveston, the son of a Gascon knight, whom the late king, had given him as a companion. Gaveston, though brave, witty, and accomplished, was dissipated and insolent ; and the king, finding his society injurious to the prince, had banished him the realm, and bound his son by oath never to recall him without his permission. This injunction he solemnly repeated, when he summoned the prince, who was going to London, to the side of his sick-bed at Carlisle. At the same time he charged him, in case of his own death, not to intermit the Scottish war ; and it is added, made him swear, that when he was dead, he would cause his body to be boiled in a caldron till the flesh was separated from the bones, which last he should always have carried before him when marching against the Scots.

The new king had not sufficient strength of mind to refuse an oath, or to keep it when taken. His first act

* Authorities,—Hemingford, Walsingham, Knighton, Moor, Murimath, Avesbury, and Fordun.

was to issue an order for the return of Gaveston ; he buried the body of his father at Westminster ; and after marching a little way into Scotland, where he was joined by Gaveston, he retired and disbanded his army. Even before the favourite's return the royal duchy of Cornwall had been conferred on him ; the royal officers were now changed at his pleasure ; he was made lord chamberlain, and married to the sister of the earl of Gloucester, the king's niece. A large grant of lands in Guienne was bestowed on him ; and at Christmas, when Edward was departing for France to do his homage and espouse the princess Isabella, Gaveston was appointed guardian of the realm. On the king's return with his lovely bride (Feb. 1308), the guardian and the barons of the realm came, as usual, to meet him ; Edward, regardless of decorum, the moment he beheld Gaveston, rushed into his arms, kissed him and called him his brother ; of the other nobles he took little notice. At the coronation (Feb. 25), to the mortal offence of the ancient nobility, the high honour of carrying the crown before the king was assigned to the favourite. Their indignation now knew no bounds, and three days afterwards they met and petitioned the king to banish him. Edward put them off till Easter, but he was then obliged to comply. Gaveston himself was made to swear that he would never return, and the bishops pronounced him excommunicate if he broke his oath. The king made him new grants of land and accompanied him to Bristol, where he embarked, and the barons to their surprise soon learned that he was governor of Ireland.

The causes of the enmity of the nobles to Gaveston are to be sought not merely in their patriotism, or their national or family pride : the personal vanity of many of them had been wounded on various occasions. Gaveston, who excelled in martial exercises, had unhorsed the earls of Lancaster, Hereford, and others in the tournaments, and



his biting wit had affixed nicknames on many of them* which mortified more than serious injuries. When he was no longer present however their resentment gradually cooled, and the king found means to induce them to allow of his return; the pope absolved him from his oath, and Edward hastened to Chester to meet him (1309). But untaught by experience both the king and his minion went on in their old courses. The barons refused to attend a parliament summoned to York. As the king's necessities were urgent, Gaveston was obliged to conceal himself in Flanders, and the parliament then met at Westminster (Feb. 1310).

The barons, as they were wont when intending to intimidate their sovereign, came attended by their armed vassals. The king was obliged to consent to the appointment of a committee of eight earls, seven bishops and six barons, who under the title of Ordainers were to regulate his household and redress the national grievances. He then proceeded to the North, where he was joined by Gaveston, on whom he lavished more wealth and honours. He entered Scotland and advanced to the Forth; he passed the winter at Berwick, and in the spring (1311) he committed the conduct of the war to his favourite. In August he returned to London to receive the articles of reform which had been drawn up. These articles tended chiefly to limit the excesses of the royal authority, and to give parliament a control in the appointment of public officers, and it was expressly provided that Gaveston should be banished the king's dominions. Edward after a long resistance consented to sign them; but he previously made a protest, with a view probably to a future evasion. Gaveston and he parted with tears (Nov. 1), and the favourite

* He called Lancaster "the old hog," and "the stage player;" Pembroke, "Joseph the Jew;" Gloucester, "the cuckold's bird;" and Warwick, "the black dog of the wood."

retired to Flanders. The king dissolved the parliament and returned to the north, and before Christmas the barons learned with surprise and indignation that Gaveston had rejoined him at York. By a royal proclamation (Jan. 18, 1312) it was stated that he had returned in obedience to the king's orders, and a new grant was made him of his estates and honours.

The barons saw that there was an end of all hopes of weaning the king from Gaveston, and that they or the favourite must fall. A new confederacy was formed, of which the head was Thomas earl of Lancaster, grandson of Henry III., the possessor of five earldoms; and the primate gave it his countenance. Having assembled under the pretext of a tournament, they proceeded to York, and finding that the king was at Newcastle they followed him thither. Regardless of the tears and entreaties of his queen, Edward fled with his favourite to Tynemouth, and thence by sea to Scarborough, where leaving Gaveston in the castle he returned to York. Gaveston was besieged by the earls of Surrey and Pembroke, and finding the place untenable he surrendered (May 17) to the latter on condition of being reinstated in it if no accommodation could be effected within two months. Meantime he was to be confined in his own castle at Wallingford. On the way thither he halted at Pembroke's castle of Dedington near Banbury, where that earl left him with only a few servants. He went to rest without suspicion; before dawn he was desired to dress himself and come forth; at the gate he found the earl of Warwick and a large force; he was placed on a mule and led to Warwick castle, where shouts of triumph and martial music greeted his arrival. The confederate lords sat in council; it was proposed to spare his life, but one of the party observed, "You have caught the fox; if you let him go you will have to hunt him again." His death was resolved on; in vain he threw himself at the feet of Lancaster and implored for mercy; he was

taken to an adjacent heath and there beheaded (June 19). The intelligence of this atrocious deed threw the king into a paroxysm of grief and rage. Time and circumstances however gradually cooled his anger or taught him to conceal it, and toward the end of the following year he and his barons were to all appearance fully reconciled.

Scotland now claimed all the attention of the English king. While Edward had been engaged in supporting his insolent favourite against his barons, Bruce had gradually made himself master of all the strong places held by the English. News arriving (1314) that the governor of Stirling had agreed to surrender if not speedily relieved, Edward summoned his military tenants to meet him at Berwick. But various difficulties being thrown in his way, and Lancaster, Warwick and other lords disobeying the summons, he did not reach Stirling till the day before that of the promised surrender, and with a force far inferior to what he had calculated on*. He found Bruce's army arranged in three square columns, and extending from the *burn*, or brook, of Bannock to near the castle, with pits having sharp stakes placed in them, and covered with hurdles and sods, to protect its left wing. The men of Argyle, Carrick and the Isles formed a reserve under Bruce himself. His entire force amounted to about forty thousand men, and fifteen thousand camp followers lay in a valley at some distance with directions to show themselves during the conflict.

That very evening a skirmish took place between the advanced posts, in which Bruce clove with his battle-axe the skull of a knight named Henry de Bohun. At day-break (June 24) the Scots, having heard mass from the abbot of Inchaffray, formed in line of battle; the abbot

* According to the poet Barbour, the great Scottish authority for the details of this battle, he had 100,000 men, of whom 40,000 were cavalry and 50,000 archers. (Tytler, *Hist. of Scotland*, i. 296.) Lingard says that "it is impossible to ascertain the number of Edward's army." The infantry seem to have amounted to only 21,540 men.

again prayed, and the whole army fell on their knees. "They kneel!" cried some English, "they beg for mercy!" "Be not deceived," replied Ingelram de Umfraville; "they beg for mercy, but it is only from God." The English infantry and archers advanced; the Scots received them boldly: the conflict was long and dubious; Bruce brought up his reserve; some men-at-arms took the English in flank, and they broke and fled. The earl of Gloucester then led on the horse to renew the engagement, but the slight covering of the pits gave way under their weight, and men and horses were overthrown.

The appearance of those who lay in the valley completed the dismay of the English, and they fled in all directions. Edward himself never halted till he reached Dunbar, where he embarked for Berwick. His treasure, military stores and engines fell into the hands of the conquerors. Many knights and esquires were made prisoners; these Bruce treated with kindness and courtesy: the common soldiery were slaughtered without mercy.

The victory of Bannock-burn secured the independence of Scotland. Nothing can be more natural than that it should form a topic of proud exultation to writers of that nation; but *we* who have no national predilections may ask what was the real gain of Scotland; and would it not have been as well, since the whole island was to be ruled by one sceptre, if the union had taken place then, as three centuries later, after Scotland had endured all the evils of feudal anarchy and of a continued state of predatory warfare with England*?

A dreadful famine and pestilence succeeded in England; the dissensions between the king and his barons were renewed. In 1315 Bruce sent his brother Edward with six

* Mr. Tytler bids us look at Ireland as a proof of what Scotland in such case would have been. We answer this by bidding *him* look at Wales. There could be no analogy between Scotland and Ireland. The Scots differed little from the English in language, manners and laws.

thousand men over to Ireland at the invitation of the native chiefs, numbers of whom joined his standard, and the following year he was crowned king of that island. Robert Bruce passed over to his aid, and they advanced to Dublin and Limerick. But the severity of the weather forcing them to fall back to Ulster, Robert returned home, and Edward was afterwards (Oct. 5, 1318) defeated and slain near Dundalk. Robert after his return reduced Berwick (1318), and spread his ravages to the Humber; and Edward having vainly endeavoured to recover Berwick, agreed to a truce for two years (1320).

The feeble mind of Edward, incapable of self-reliance, felt a favourite to be indispensable. The place of Gaveston was therefore now occupied by Hugh le Despenser, the son of a most respectable old gentleman of the same name. Exclusive of any insolence of his own, the very circumstance of his being the favourite would have sufficed to render Spenser an object of enmity to Lancaster and the other factious barons, and an occasion soon occurred which set them at enmity with him. Spenser having married one of the co-heiresses of the earl of Gloucester had become possessed of a large property on the marches of Wales. John de Mowbray, who had married the daughter of the lord of Gower, whose estate lay contiguous to that of the favourite, on the death of his father-in-law entered into possession of it without the usual livery of seizin from the crown. Spenser, who coveted the lands of Gower, now maintained that they were forfeit. The lords of the marches associated (1321) for the defence of their rights. With a large force they entered the favourite's lands, took his castles and destroyed all his property. They then marched into Yorkshire and formed an alliance with Lancaster and the barons of his faction against the two Spensers; and headed by Lancaster they advanced toward London, wasting and destroying the estates of the elder Spenser on their way. From St. Albans they sent a message to the king

requiring the banishment of the Spensers; Edward returned a spirited refusal: they advanced and took up their quarters about Holborn and Clerkenwell, whence after some delay for consultation they proceeded with armed men to Westminster, where the parliament was sitting, and forced the king and barons to assent to their demands. They then separated and retired to their homes.

But ere two months were passed the king saw himself able to take vengeance on them. As the queen was on her way to Canterbury she proposed to pass the night at the royal castle of Ledes. Lord Badlesmere, the governor, was absent; his wife refused her admittance; some of her attendants even were slain. The queen complained loudly of the insult; the feelings of the nation were roused, and Edward was enabled to assemble an army, and attack and take the castle. Feeling himself now strong he recalled the Spensers as being banished illegally. The confederates had again recourse to arms; and they formed an alliance with Robert Bruce (1322). The king advanced northwards; at Burton-on-Trent Lancaster held the royal troops for three days in check, but when they had forded the river he retired into Yorkshire. On reaching Boroughbridge he found the opposite bank of the river occupied by sir Simon Ward and sir Andrew Harclay. The earl of Hereford was slain in attempting to force the bridge; Lancaster having vainly tried a ford was obliged to surrender. He was conducted to his own castle of Pontefract, where he was arraigned before the king and some earls and barons. He was not permitted to make any defence; in regard for his royal descent the sentence of hanging passed on him was commuted to decapitation: he was then set on a grey pony without a bridle; his confessor walked by his side; the people insulted and pelted him with mud. "King of Heaven," cried the unhappy nobleman, "grant me mercy, for the king of earth has forsaken me." On an eminence without the town the cavalcade halted; the earl knelt with


his face to the east; he was made to turn to the north, whence he had looked for aid, and his head was then struck off. Twenty-eight of the captive knights were hanged as traitors; others were fined or imprisoned. The elder Spenser was created earl of Winchester, and several of the forfeited estates were bestowed on him.

Among the most important captives was Roger Mortimer of Wigmore, one of the lords marchers of Wales. Having managed to corrupt one of the officers of the Tower he got to the river, where a boat was waiting for him; on the other side he found his servants and horses: he eluded all pursuit and reached the coast of Hampshire, where a ship lay ready, and passing over to France he entered the service of king Charles, the queen of England's brother. This prince, under pretence of Edward's not having appeared at his coronation to do him homage, was planning to deprive him of his foreign dominions. It was suggested that the queen should go over to Paris to exert her influence over the mind of her brother. She therefore visited France (1325) with a splendid retinue, and a treaty similar to that by which Edward I. had been cajoled out of Guienne was concluded. The king however agreed to this treaty, and he was on his way to go and perform homage when he fell sick at Dover. A proposal then came from the queen that he should resign Guienne and Ponthieu to his son, who was then but twelve years old, and that Charles would accept the young prince's homage. Edward assented; the prince departed, promising a speedy return: the homage was performed, but there was no sign of the return of the queen or her son. The king wrote in affectionate terms to both; the queen replied urging her fears of Spenser. Edward in his answer alleged that this was a mere pretence, as she and Spenser had always been on the best terms. He also wrote to the pope and to the king and peers of France, but all to no purpose.

The fact seems to be that the queen was now living in

adultery with Roger Mortimer, whose person and manners had gained her affections. Her brother, who knew not or affected not to know her dishonour, abetted her in her opposition to her husband, and Edward at length felt himself obliged to declare war against him. Isabella now meditating nothing less than an invasion of England, and reducing the power of the Spensers by force, retired to the court of the count of Hainault, to whose daughter Philippa she affianced her son (1326). Being furnished by the count with a force of two thousand men and joined by all the English exiles, she set sail and landed (Sept. 24) at Orwell in Suffolk. In her train appeared the earl of Kent, brother to the king; she was joined on landing by his other brother the earl of Norfolk, the earl of Leicester brother of Lancaster, and the bishops of Ely, Hereford and Lincoln, all at the head of their vassals. Robert de Watteville, who was sent to oppose her, went over to her with his troops. Their march was directed to London; their sole object, it was declared, was the liberation of the king from the tyranny of the Spensers and of the chancellor Baldock. Edward having vainly tried to induce the citizens to arm in his defence left the city; and he was scarcely gone when the population rose, seized and beheaded the bishop of Exeter, robbed and plundered several other persons, forced the Tower, set at liberty the prisoners, and declared for the queen.

The king attended by his favourites retired to Bristol, closely pursued by the earl of Kent and John de Hainault. Leaving the elder Spenser to defend the castle of that city, he proceeded with the younger Spenser to the marches of Wales, and finding the people there little inclined to arm in his favour, he took shipping with his favourite for Lundy Island, at the mouth of the Bristol channel. The queen with her forces soon reached Bristol, and Spenser finding the citizens mutinous surrendered the town and castle on the third day. He was forthwith brought to trial on the



charge of having unduly influenced the royal mind, advised the execution of Lancaster, etc. Like Lancaster he was not allowed to make any defence. The venerable old man of more than ninety years was forthwith hanged as a traitor, and emboweled while alive ; his body was cut into pieces and thrown to the dogs.

The unhappy king was prevented by adverse winds from reaching Lundy. He landed at Swansea, and proceeding to Neath sought to conceal himself in that neighbourhood. Meantime the barons of the queen's party, acting as a parliament at Bristol, declared the realm left without a ruler by his absence, and named the young prince guardian of the kingdom. Shortly after, Spenser and Baldock having been betrayed to Leicester, the king made a voluntary surrender of himself and was conducted to the castle of Kenilworth.

Spenser was arraigned at Hereford before Trussler, the judge who had condemned his father. A string of the most ridiculous and improbable charges was made against him. He was of course condemned, and was hung, with a wreath of nettles on his head, on a gallows fifty feet high. The earl of Arundel and two others were beheaded as having consented to the death of Lancaster. Baldock being a priest was confined in Newgate, where he died.

From Hereford the queen returned to London, where a parliament having assembled (Jan. 7, 1327), the crafty bishop of Hereford, the aider of all her projects, having expatiated on the vindictive character of the king and the danger of trusting the queen in his hands, bade the members retire and come next day, prepared to say whether it were better to restore the king or appoint the prince to reign. In the morning the place was filled with turbulent citizens ; no one ventured to speak in favour of the king ; the prince was proclaimed by acclamation ; and the peers, four prelates excepted, swore fealty to him. A few days after (13th), articles charging him with incapacity, indo-

lence, cruelty, etc. were exhibited against the king, and he was deposed; but as the queen burst into loud lamentations and affected great scruples as to the legality of such a proceeding, to satisfy these pretended doubts, a deputation was sent to Kenilworth, with directions, by promises and threats, to extort what should be styled a voluntary resignation from the king. It is needless to say they succeeded, and on the day after their return (24th) the accession of the new king was proclaimed by the heralds.

The deposed monarch was still left in the custody of Leicester, now earl of Lancaster, but as that nobleman treated him with attention and kindness, he was taken from him and committed to sir John Maltravers, by whom he was carried to Corfe, to Bristol, and finally to Berkeley; and it is said that gross insults and indignities were offered to him in the hope of finally disturbing his reason*. The cause of this last removal was that lord Berkeley had been joined in commission with Maltravers. Berkeley however being ill and away from home the charge of guarding the king had devolved upon two of his officers, Thomas Gournay and William Ogle. One night (Sept. 21) shrieks were heard to ring through the castle, and in the morning the neighbouring gentry and the citizens of Bristol were invited to behold the dead body of the deposed king. No marks of violence appeared, but the features were distorted, and it was reported that death had been caused by introducing a red-hot iron through a tube into the intestines. He was buried privately at the abbey-church of Gloucester, and no inquiry whatever was made at the time†.

Such was the fate of this most unhappy prince. Too

* It was said that one day when he was to be shaved his keepers fetched dirty water out of a ditch for the purpose. He desired it to be changed; they refused; he burst into tears, and cried that in spite of their insolence he would be shaved with clean and warm water.

† See Appendix (R).

simple and innocent for the time in which his fortune was cast, he perished the victim of his own weakness of character and of the crimes of those who should have guided and protected him.

It was in the reign of Edward II. that the potent and wealthy order of the Knights-Templars was suppressed throughout Europe. The principal agents in the affair were Philip king of France and his creature the pope Clement V.; the charges made against the knights were in general monstrous and absurd, the real ground of their persecution being their wealth; the tortures to which they were put were dreadful. The suppression of the Templars ranks among those high crimes which stand forth prominently on the canvas of history. Proceedings were taken against the order in England as elsewhere, but as the court was not hostile to them none were put to death*.

* In the "Secret Societies of the Middle Ages," a volume of the Library of Entertaining Knowledge, a tolerably full account of the Templars will be found. That volume was compiled by the present writer in 1830, and it was printed in 1837 *without his knowledge*. As it was in a very imperfect state, and as great liberties were taken with it (particularly with the Introduction, much of which is not his), he does not hold himself accountable for the many errors which it contains. It is he believes not usual to print a book without informing the author.

CHAPTER VII.

EDWARD III. (OF WINDSOR)*.

1327—1377.

Peace with Scotland.—Tyranny of Mortimer ;—his seizure and execution.—Affairs of Scotland.—Battle of Halidon Hill.—Edward claims the crown of France.—Invasion of France.—The Countess of Montfort.—Invasion of France.—Battle of Creci.—Siege of Calais.—Battle of Poitiers.—State of France.—Peace of Bretigni.—The Black Prince in Spain ;—his death.—Death of the king.—State of the constitution.—Windsor Castle and the order of the Garter.

THE reversal of attainders and the confiscation of the estates of the Spensers and their adherents were the first acts of the new government. Of these estates the larger portion went to Mortimer, now earl of March, and a sum of 20,000*l.* a year was assigned to the queen. A council of regency was appointed, the members of which were entirely under the control of the queen and Mortimer.

Though the truce with Scotland was not expired, Bruce seized the occasion of invading England, and poured a body of twenty-four thousand men into the northern counties, where they committed fearful ravages. The young king of England having assembled forty thousand men marched to Durham, and then crossed the Tyne with the design of intercepting the Scots on their return. Having waited seven days to no purpose, he repassed the river, and at length found the Scots posted on a hill on the right bank of the Wear. The two armies remained for some days opposite each other, separated by the river. At length the Scots decamped in the night, and the English army

* Authorities : Hemingford, Walsingham, Knighton, Avesbury, Murimuth, Fordun and Froissart.

finding pursuit hopeless returned to Durham. It was disbanded a few days after at York. The following year (1328) a peace was concluded with Scotland, whose absolute independence was acknowledged in the most ample manner, and Edward's sister Jane was betrothed to David the son and heir of Robert Bruce.


The odium of this peace, at which the people were highly displeased, fell chiefly on Mortimer. This aspiring man, heedless of the fate of Gaveston and Spenser, far outwent them in insolence, and the haughty barons, especially the princes of the blood, could ill brook to see him in effect the ruler of the realm. They took arms, but Lancaster being deserted by the earls of Kent and Norfolk was forced to submit and sue for pardon. Mortimer being determined to strike terror into the princes, selected the earl of Kent as his victim. His agents persuaded this weak but well-meaning man that his brother the late king was still alive, and he was led to form projects for restoring him to his throne. When Mortimer thought he had sufficient evidence against him he caused him to be seized and arraigned. The earl acknowledged his own letters which were produced; he was found guilty, and sentenced to die as a traitor, and he was beheaded the following day (Mar. 21, 1330). His estates were given to Mortimer's youngest son Geoffrey.

Mortimer probably now deemed his power secure, but in reality he had only reached the edge of the precipice. The young king had attained his eighteenth year; his spirit was high, and he could ill bear the restraint to which he was subject. He secretly confided his thoughts to lord Montacute, who advised him to seize Mortimer at the parliament which was to be held at Nottingham. The king assented, and some persons who could be depended on were engaged in the design.

When the time for the meeting of parliament was arrived, the queen with her son and Mortimer took up their abode

in the castle of Nottingham. For Mortimer's security, a strong guard lay in it ; the locks on the gates were changed, and the keys were placed every night under the queen's pillow. Montacute informed sir Thomas Eland, the governor, of the king's pleasure, previously swearing him to secrecy ; and Eland then told him of a subterraneous passage, which was unknown to Mortimer, and through which he would admit the king's friends. Montacute rode with his friends into the country, and Mortimer, who had received some hints of their design, attributed their departure to their fear of discovery. Before midnight Eland admitted them through the passage ; on the stairs leading to the principal tower they were joined by the king ; they ascended in silence till they heard the sound of voices in an apartment adjoining that of the queen, where Mortimer was in consultation with the bishop of Lincoln and some other friends. They burst open the door, slaying two knights who defended it. The queen in alarm cried from her bed, "Sweet son, fair son, spare my gentle [noble] Mortimer." She then rushed into the room, but in spite of her efforts Mortimer was made a prisoner. Next morning (Oct. 20) the king announced that he had assumed the reins of government, and summoned a parliament to meet him at Westminster.

When the parliament met (Nov. 26) Mortimer was accused of having set enmity between the late king and his queen ; of having caused the death of the king and of the earl of Kent, and of various other offences. He was condemned without hesitation, and hanged three days after (29th) at the Elms at Tyburn, with his associate sir Simon Bereford. The queen was confined to her manor of Risings near London, and her income reduced to 3000*l.* a year, which the king afterwards increased to 4000*l.* He paid her an annual visit of ceremony, but never allowed her to meddle in affairs of state. In this retirement she passed the remaining twenty-seven years of her life.



Scotland was the first object which attracted the attention of the young king. The English and Scottish lords had held lands in both kingdoms, and at the late peace little care appears to have been taken for their interests. As Robert Bruce was now dead, the English claimants finding that their king would not interfere, resolved (1332) to endeavour to regain their lands by the sword. They placed at their head Edward son of John Baliol, and having collected about three thousand men, embarked at Ravenspur, and landed (Aug. 6) on the coast of Fife. Baliol then sent his fleet to the mouth of the Tay, and with his small army boldly marched into the interior. The earl of Mar, the regent, had assembled two armies, each of thirty thousand men, led by himself and the earl of March. Baliol came up with that of the regent at Duplin, crossed the river Earn in the night, and fell on and slaughtered the Scots in their camp. When the daylight showed the regent his enemies he rallied his men and engaged them. A total defeat was the lot of the Scots. Mar himself, several of the nobles, and it is said twelve thousand men, were slain. Baliol then sped away to Perth pursued by the earl of March, who invested the town by land and by water; but the English ships attacked and defeated his fleet, and want of provisions obliged his army to disperse. The friends of his family now resorted to Baliol, and he was crowned at Scone (Sept. 24), having won a kingdom in less than seven weeks! His opponents then solicited a truce for assembling a parliament, to which Baliol consented; but during the truce he was suddenly attacked (Dec. 18) at Annan by the earl of Moray, and was forced to seek refuge in the English borders.

Edward, who had perhaps given Baliol private encouragement, had in the month of November formed two secret treaties with him. By the one Baliol acknowledged the feudal superiority of England, gave up the town of Berwick, and offered to marry the princess Jane, whose mar-

riage with David Bruce had not been consummated. By the second the two kings bound themselves to aid each other against all domestic enemies. As the Scots by their incursions gave a pretext for charging them with a breach of the treaty of peace, Edward prevailed on his parliament to consent to a renewal of the war, and Baliol (1333) laid siege to Berwick, which was gallantly defended by the earl of March. The siege had lasted two months when king Edward arrived; the operations were now carried on more vigorously, and the garrison gave hostages to surrender if not relieved by a certain day. The earl of Moray, the regent, came with a numerous army and offered battle; the English kept within their lines; and the regent having put some knights and provisions into the town, retired and laid siege to Bamborough, where queen Philippa was residing. Edward then required the garrison to surrender; they replied that they had been relieved; he hanged one of the hostages, and they then agreed to admit the English at the end of three days unless the Scottish army should oblige them to raise the siege, or put in three hundred men-at-arms* between sunrise and sunset of the same day. On the afternoon of the third day (July 19) the Scottish army appeared, and advanced to the attack in four divisions. Edward drew up his troops on Halidon-hill. The Scots had to make their way through marshy ground at its foot, and in their progress they suffered severely from the discharges of the English archers. Weary and in disorder they reached the spot where the enemy awaited them. After a brave struggle they were totally routed; the regent himself and several nobles were slain on the field; the fugitives were slaughtered without mercy, especially by the Irish in Edward's army; and the total number of the slain is said to have been thirty thousand. Berwick surrendered; the young king and his betrothed, the princess Jane, who

* The men-at-arms were the heavy feudal cavalry, consisting of the knights and their esquires.

were at Dumbarton, were conveyed to France for safety. Baliol was acknowledged as king in a Scottish parliament, the fealty to Edward was renewed, and all the country eastward of a line drawn from Dumfries to Linlithgow was ceded to him. But the Scots soon rose again against Baliol, and after a contest of some years David was enabled to return (1341) and resume his crown.

It is not unlikely that Edward would have conquered Scotland, but that his attention was diverted from it by the prospect of a more brilliant though less solid acquisition. He was now induced to put forth a claim to the crown of France in right of his mother. Her father Philip the Fair had left three sons and this one daughter. The eldest son Louis Hutin, who succeeded, died, leaving an only daughter; but as the queen was pregnant his brother Philip was made regent till she should be delivered. She brought forth a son, who died within a few days, and Philip was then proclaimed king; the duke of Burgundy asserted the rights of the young princess, who was his niece, but the states-general declared her and all females incapable of inheriting the crown. Philip died leaving three daughters, and his brother Charles succeeded, who also died leaving one daughter, and his widow pregnant. His cousin-german Philip of Valois was made regent, and when the queen was delivered of a daughter (1329) he was placed at once upon the throne. This regulation of the descent of the French crown was said, though improperly, to depend on a law of the Salian Franks, hence called the Salic law; but the notion had probably grown up from the circumstance of the next heir, even from the time of Clovis, having always happened to be a male; the states therefore, when called to decide after the death of Louis Hutin, naturally supposed such to be the law, and regulated the succession accordingly.

Edward of England was the only opponent to the claim of Philip of Valois. He fancied, at least he asserted, that

though females could not inherit themselves, they could transmit a right to their male descendants, and he therefore claimed the crown of France in right of his mother. Nothing however could be worse founded than this claim; for even allowing the principle, the right of the king of Navarre, son of Jane daughter of Louis Hutin, was preferable to his. Accordingly the twelve peers and the barons of France rejected his claim at once, and he was shortly after summoned to do homage to Philip for Guienne, with which summons he deemed it expedient to comply. Still there was no cordiality between him and Philip, who kept possession of some fortresses in Guienne, and aided the partisans of David in Scotland, though Edward offered him a large sum of money for those fortresses, and made various proposals of marriage between their children. At length Edward began to think of reviving and asserting his claim to the crown of France, to which, it is said, he was mainly impelled by the counsels of Robert count of Artois, who being obliged to fly from France for the forgery of public documents, had found a refuge at the court of England (1337).

The first object of Edward when he had resolved on war was to form as many alliances as possible. Through his father-in-law the count of Hainault, and by means of large sums of money, he gained the duke of Brabant and some more of the neighbouring petty princes. He also formed an alliance with the emperor of Germany. But he chiefly sought to win the Flemings, and here a phænomenon, unique to the north of the Alps, presented itself,—application was to be made, not to a prince, but to a leading demagogue. For in Flanders the lower ranks had by trade and manufacture acquired a degree of opulence and influence unknown elsewhere. They therefore would not tamely submit to the oppressions and extortions of their lords; they rose in tumults; they had driven their earl into France, and like the Grecian and Italian cities in similar circum-

stances they were ruled with despotic power by their leaders. The *tyrant*, as in the Greek sense we may call him, of Flanders at this time was James van Artaveldt, a brewer of Ghent, and to him did Edward condescend to sue. Artaveldt readily embraced his interests, and invited him to pass over to Flanders without delay. The king having obtained a cheerful consent and a grant from his parliament, and raised more money by forced loans, by pawning the crown jewels and seizing the property of the Lombards*, sailed over to Antwerp in the summer (1338). But he found it impossible to excite his allies to action, and all he could obtain was a promise to join him the following summer, when the campaign should be opened by the siege of Cambray.

At the appointed time (1339) Edward found himself at the head of an army of fifty thousand men, with which he appeared before the walls of Cambray. He wasted its territory and then entered France; but here the counts of Namur and Hainault quitted him, alleging feudal scruples. He advanced then for twelve leagues, wasting and burning as he went. His other allies now refused to go any further in an enemy's country. Philip soon appeared with a more numerous host; the two armies were drawn up in battle-array near Laon, but no action resulted. Both then retired, and Edward having thanked and disbanded his allies returned to England, having thus to no purpose wasted so much money, and being in consequence now 300,000*l.* in debt. While he was in Flanders, Edward, by the advice of Artaveldt, assumed the title of king of France to satisfy the feudal scruples of the Flemings. He had also received from the emperor the title of 'Vicar of the Empire' to enable him to command Germans. The pope at this time vainly sought to mediate between him and Philip.

* When the Jews were expelled, the trade of banking and money-lending fell into the hands of the Italian traders, who were mostly Lombards. Lombard-street (named from them) and its vicinity are still the great seats of banking.

The next year (1340) Philip assembled in the harbour of Sluys an immense fleet in order to intercept his rival on his passage. Edward immediately collected all the ships in the southern ports and sailed to engage it. He found it moored in four lines across the passage into the harbour, the ships being fastened together with iron chains and having turrets supplied with large stones at their heads. Edward at first put out to sea to get clear of the sun, which was in his eyes, and then bore down with wind and tide. After a stout resistance all the ships in the first line were captured. Just then lord Morley came up with a fleet from the northern ports; the English advanced to attack the remaining lines, of which the last alone offered any opposition. The loss of the English was but two ships and about four thousand men; nearly all the vessels of the enemy were sunk or taken and about thirty thousand men perished.

Edward landed next day; his allies crowded to his standard, and at the head of two hundred thousand men he advanced to lay siege to Tournay and St. Omer. But those sent against the latter place, fifty thousand Flemings under Robert of Artois, were seized with a sudden panic before they reached the town, and fled, leaving their arms and baggage behind them. Tournay was defended by a large garrison, and all Edward's assaults were repelled. The king of France soon appeared with a numerous army, but as before he declined coming to an engagement. Edward, who desired a speedy issue, sent him a challenge to decide their quarrel by a single combat, by one of one hundred on each side, or by a general engagement. As he addressed him simply as Philip of Valois, the king of France replied that it did not become him to take any notice of such letters; he upbraided Edward with his breach of fealty, and assured him he would chastise him when he thought proper. At length Jane of Hainault, sister to the one king and mother-in-law to the other, came from the

convent to which she had retired, and by her entreaties engaged them to consent to an armistice for nine months, which was afterwards extended under the mediation of the pope.


Disputes with his clergy and nobility occupied Edward's thoughts for some time after his return home. He was immersed in debt; the emperor had been induced to withdraw his title of 'Vicar of the Empire;' and he was disgusted with the lukewarmness and cupidity of the princes on whom he had lavished his money. He would therefore have probably given up all his designs on France but for a new prospect that opened to him on another side.

John duke of Brittany being without issue, had with the concurrence of the states recognised as his heir Jane the daughter of his brother Guy, and had married her to Charles of Blois the French king's nephew. But on the death of the duke (1341), his half-brother, John earl of Montfort, though he had sworn fealty to Charles and Jane, made himself master of most of the strong places and asserted his right to the succession. He then crossed over to England and offered to do homage to Edward as king of France if he would aid him against Philip; for the peers of France had decided in favour of Charles, and the king was preparing to restore him by arms. Edward, though Montfort's claim went on the very opposite principle to that by which he himself claimed the crown of France, readily made a treaty with him. Montfort returned to Brittany and threw himself into the town of Nantes, where he was besieged by the duke of Normandy, Philip's eldest son; the city was betrayed by the inhabitants, and Montfort was made a captive and shut up in the tower of the Louvre at Paris.

But though Montfort was a captive his cause was still maintained. His wife Jane, sister to the earl of Flanders, a woman of a most heroic spirit, when she heard of his captivity assembled the citizens of Rennes, and presenting to

them her infant son implored them to defend the last male issue of their ancient princes. Moved by her tears and eloquence, aided by a distribution of a large sum of money, they swore to live and die in her cause. A similar spirit was shown in the other towns which she visited. Having sent her son for security to England, she shut herself up in the fortress of Hennebon, where the following spring (1342) she was closely besieged by the troops of Charles. The countess herself, cased in armour, directed the defence and inspirited her men. One day while the besiegers were busily engaged in an assault, she sallied forth by the opposite gate at the head of two hundred men, and attacked and set their camp on fire. Finding her return cut off she ordered her men to disperse and make as best they could for Brest, and soon after at the head of five hundred men she forced her way through the hostile camp and re-entered Hennebon in triumph. Fatigue and famine however were wearing away the garrison, and the bishop of Leon was arranging the terms of a capitulation, when the countess, who had ascended the highest turret of the castle to look out to sea, saw sails in the distance. "The English! I see the English!" she cried aloud; the soldiers grasped their arms; the treaty was broken off, and sir Walter Manny, who had long been detained by contrary winds, entered the harbour with a large force, and sallying forth drove off the besiegers.

The countess soon after made a voyage to England to solicit more effectual succour. She returned with a fleet of forty-five ships, carrying troops commanded by Robert of Artois. A French fleet met them; an action ensued, in which the countess displayed her usual heroism. They took the town of Vannes, but it was soon after recovered by some of Charles's party, and Robert of Artois died of a wound which he received. As the truce with France was now expired, Edward embarked in the autumn with twelve thousand men, and landed at Morbihan near Vannes, but




he unwisely made three divisions of his force, and invested at the same time Vannes, Nantes and Rennes. On the approach of the duke of Normandy with a large army he drew his forces again together, and both armies lay for some weeks of the winter opposite each other. The papal legates then interposed their good offices, and a truce was concluded (1343) for three years and eight months. The liberation of Montfort was stipulated, but Philip still detained him in prison. At the end of three years he made his escape disguised as a merchant, but he died shortly after at Hennebon.

The truce was of short continuance, mutual infractions of it were complained of, and (1345) Edward had the address to induce his parliament to advise him to renew the war. The king's cousin the earl of Derby, son of the earl of Lancaster, one of the bravest, most virtuous, and accomplished noblemen of the age, was sent with an army to Guienne. Landing at Bayonne he advanced to Bordeaux; he then entered Perigord and reduced several places. A town named Auberoche being now in the hands of the English, the count of Lisle, the French general, secretly assembled twelve thousand men and invested it. Derby with but three hundred men-at-arms and six hundred archers hastened to its relief. At supper-time (Oct. 23) he burst into the enemy's camp, took or killed the general and principal officers, and dispersed the troops. He then attacked the camp at the other side of the town; the garrison at the same time made a sally, and of the whole twelve thousand men but a few escaped. Derby pursued his career of victory, and at length the French government found it necessary to send the duke of Normandy with an overwhelming force to oppose him.

The king of England learning the danger of Guienne prepared to lead a large force to its relief. He had lately gone over to Sluys to meet the deputies of the Flemish towns, whom he wished to transfer their allegiance from

their own count to his son prince Edward. Artavelde gave him all the aid in his power and gained over some of the cities; but in his own town of Ghent the people had been turned against him, and they burst into his house (July 17) and murdered him. This tragic event however did not break off the good feeling between the king and the Flemings, who engaged to invade France in concert with him.

In the month of July 1346, Edward embarked at Southampton with an army of four thousand men-at-arms, ten thousand archers, ten thousand Welsh and six thousand Irish light troops, attended by the prince of Wales, now fifteen years of age, and the principal nobility. He sailed for Guienne, but at the suggestion of Geoffrey d'Harcourt, a Norman exile, or perhaps such being his original design, he suddenly changed his course and landed at La Hogue in Normandy (July 12). He destroyed all the shipping in the adjacent ports, his troops spread their ravages over the whole country, and Caranton, St. Lo, Caen and other towns were taken. He advanced along the left bank of the Seine in the hope of taking Rouen, intending then to march for Picardy, and join an army of forty thousand Flemings who were to invade France. But he found the bridge at Rouen broken, and king Philip lying with a numerous army on the opposite side. He went further up the river; but every bridge was broken, and the French still moved as he did. He burned the towns, his light troops even fired St. Germain, St. Cloud, Neuilly and other places close to Paris; but Philip, whose object was to surround and overwhelm him, would give no opportunity of fighting. Edward then had recourse to stratagem. Decamping early one morning from Poissy he marched as if for Paris, and when he had ascertained that the French were in motion he suddenly retraced his steps, crossed by the bridge, which workmen had meantime repaired, and entered Pontoise. He then advanced rapidly, burning on his way the suburbs




of Beauvais. On reaching the Somme he found that all the bridges were secured, and that Philip was at Amiens with 100,000 men. By the promise of liberty and a large reward, a peasant named Gobin Agace, who was among the prisoners, was induced to lead the English to a ford at Blanchetaque near Abbeville which might be passed at ebb-tide. They set out at midnight: the water was not sufficiently low when they reached it, and while they waited they saw Godemar du Faye come with twelve thousand men and occupy the opposite bank, and every moment they expected to be overtaken by king Philip. At ten o'clock the tide was out; the men-at-arms entered the river; the French cavalry dashed in to meet them; the English fought with the valour inspired by despair, and drove them off with the loss of two thousand men, and all but a few stragglers were safely over when Philip came up. The rising of the tide prevented the passage of the French, and they were obliged to go round by the bridge of Abbeville.

Edward marched to Crotoi on the coast, where he gave his troops rest and refreshment, and great as was the disparity of their forces he resolved to give Philip battle. He selected for this purpose an eminence behind the village of Creci (Cressy). He disposed his troops (Aug. 26) in three divisions, each composed of men-at-arms and archers, the latter placed in front in the form of a harrow. The prince of Wales aided by the earls of Oxford and Warwick led the first; the earls of Arundel and Northampton the second; the king himself the third or reserve. Trenches were sunk on the flanks; the baggage was placed in a wood in the rear; the horses were all removed that the danger might be common. The king, who according to the custom of the age had at dawn heard mass and received the sacrament, rode along the lines cheering the men, and at ten o'clock they took their breakfast, each sitting down where he stood. The French, who had halted

for a day at Abbeville, were now advancing. Some knights who were sent forward when they saw the firm array of the English advised the king not to give battle till the next day. Philip assented; word was given to halt; but the orders were not understood or were neglected, and the troops rolled on in confusion and disorder till they came in view of the English. Philip then, filled with rage and departing from his usual caution, ordered the Genoese crossbow-men to form and begin the fight. These were a body of six, or as some say fifteen thousand Genoese and other Italians, led by two of their nobles of the Grimaldi and Doria families. They were followed by the king's brother, the count of Alençon, at the head of a splendid body of cavalry; the rest of the army succeeded in four divisions under the king in person. The number of the French army is variously given at from sixty to one hundred and twenty thousand men.

The combat of men was preceded by that of the elements. A partial eclipse had dimmed the sun; flights of birds flew screaming over the two armies precursive of a storm, and soon the thunder roared, the lightning flashed and the rain descended in torrents. At five in the afternoon the sky cleared and the sun shone bright in the eyes of the French. The Genoese then gave three shouts, levelled their ponderous crossbows and discharged their bolts. The English archers received the discharge in silence, then drawing their long-bows from their cases they showered their cloth-yard arrows thick as snow on the Genoese, who, as they required time to recharge their bows, fell into disorder. The count of Alençon calling them cowards ordered his knights to cut them down. This but increased the confusion; many of the knights were unhorsed by the English archers, and the Welshmen ran forward and dispatched them with their knives. When clear of the Genoese the cavalry pressed on; the prince and the men-at-arms were nearly surrounded when the second line ad-



vanced; a knight was sent to Edward, who viewed the fight from the summit of a windmill, praying him to send more aid: "Is my son slain or wounded?" said he. "No!" replied the envoy. "Then," said he, "tell Warwick he shall have no aid. Let the boy win his spurs. He and they who have him in charge shall earn the whole glory of the day." This reply gave fresh vigour to the English; the count of Alençon was slain and his troops routed; the king of France then advanced to the relief, but the showers of arrows fearfully thinned his ranks; his horse was killed under him; his friends in vain urged him to retire; at length when it was growing dark John of Hainault laid hold of his bridle and forced him to quit the field. They fled to Amiens; but the fight was still kept up in various parts till terminated by the increasing darkness. When the prince approached, Edward sprang forth to meet him: "Fair son," cried he as he clasped him to his bosom, "continue your career. You have acted nobly and shown yourself worthy of me and the crown*.


Next morning a dense mist covered the sky, under which a body of English fell in with and routed the militia of Amiens and Beauvais, and a body of knights led by the bishop of Rouen and the grand prior of France. When the sun dispelled the mist thousands of the French were seen, who had passed the night under the trees and hedges, and these unfortunates were slaughtered without mercy. At noon the lords Cobham and Stafford were sent with heralds to examine the field of battle. They brought to the king eighty banners, and reported the death of eleven princes, twelve hundred knights, fourteen hundred gentlemen, four thousand men-at-arms, and thirty thousand

* According to the Florentine annalist G. Villani, Edward was greatly indebted for his victory to his cannon, now for the first time employed in battle. It seems strange that so remarkable a circumstance should have escaped the notice of Froissart. Villani died within two years after the battle; his testimony is therefore the stronger.

common men. The most illustrious of the slain was John king of Bohemia. This prince, who was blind from age, ordered four of his knights to lead him into the thick of the battle, "That I too," said he, "may have a stroke at the English." They then interlaced his and their own bridles and rushed forward, and all were speedily slain. His crest of three ostrich feathers, and his motto, "*Ich dien*" (*I serve*), were adopted by the prince of Wales, and still are those of the heir-apparent of England.

A few days after his victory Edward advanced and laid siege to the town of Calais, in order to have possession of a port on the French coast. As he resolved to trust to the effects of blockade, he placed a numerous fleet before the harbour, and he constructed a large number of huts for the shelter of his troops during the winter. The governor, John de Vienne, bent on making an obstinate defence, drove all the useless mouths, to the number of seventeen hundred persons, out of the town; the king generously let them pass through the lines, and gave each of them two pieces of silver.

The duke of Normandy being obliged to retire from Guienne, the earl of Derby crossed the Garonne, laid waste Ancenis, Saintonge and Poitou, stormed the city of Poitiers and advanced to the Loire. In Brittany Charles was defeated and made prisoner by the countess of Montfort, but his cause was sustained by his wife, also a heroine. This was in fact the age of female heroism. At the call of his ally the king of France, David of Scotland made an inroad into Cumberland and ravaged the country. The English collected in Auckland Park a force of twelve hundred men-at-arms, two thousand archers, and seven thousand militia; queen Philippa rode among them encouraging them to fight bravely; they raised a cheerful shout, and having recommended them to God and St. George the queen retired. The armies engaged at Neville's Cross near Durham (Oct. 17); the Scots were defeated with the



loss of fifteen thousand men, and the king himself and several of his nobles were conducted prisoners to London.

Edward meantime lay patiently before Calais, expecting the sure effects of famine, which soon began to be felt. De Vienne now turned five hundred more persons out of the town; but no passage would be given through the English lines, and they perished miserably from want of food and shelter. Though a fleet with supplies contrived to enter the port during the winter, the famine became more and more severe; and when all the animals in the town had been eaten, and they must surrender if not relieved, Philip at length (July 1347) appeared with an army of a hundred and fifty thousand men. But the only roads by which he could approach the English camp were secured against him; and though Edward accepted his challenge to a general engagement, he retired on the eve of the appointed day. The garrison immediately hoisted the ensign of England, and the governor from the walls proposed to sir Walter Manny, who was at hand, to surrender on condition of their lives and liberties being secured. Edward, however, would accept of nothing short of unconditional surrender; at length he agreed to be content with the lives of six of the principal burgesses.

The people met in the market to hear these terms. It seemed to them dreadful to sacrifice their fellow-citizens, but no other means of relief appeared. While they remained in perplexity, Eustace de St. Pierre, one of the leading citizens, stepped forward and offered his life for his townsmen; another and another then appeared, and the number was soon complete. The gates were opened, and De Vienne issued forth, mounted on a palfrey on account of his wounds, and followed by fifteen knights bare-headed with their swords pointed to the ground; then came the six voluntary victims, bare-headed, bare-footed, in their shirts, with halters in their hands, such being the usage in similar cases. When they came before Edward, the go-

vernor presented him his sword and the keys of the town ; then, falling on his knees with his companions, implored his mercy. Edward was, or affected to be, inexorable ; he heeded not the entreaties of his barons ; the executioner appeared, and orders were given for the death of the six devoted citizens, when the queen came forth, and falling on her knees, with tears, interceded for their lives. " Dame," said Edward, " I wish you had been in some other place ; but I cannot deny you." She took them to her tent, clothed and entertained them, and at their departure presented each with six nobles*. The king expelled most of the inhabitants from Calais and peopled it with his own subjects, making it the staple for the chief productions of his kingdom†.

The capture of Calais was succeeded by an armistice, which, under the mediation of the pope, was prolonged for six years. During this period England suffered (1348), in common with the rest of Europe, from the dreadful plague which then spread its ravages over it, and thousands of her people perished.

Edward, now conscious that he could not succeed in making his claim to the crown of France good by arms, proposed to renounce it on condition of the provinces which he held being ceded to him in sovereignty. This proposal Philip indignantly rejected ; but on his death (1350) his son and successor John seemed willing to listen to it. Envoys met at Guisnes ; it was arranged that the renunciations should be made in presence of the pope ; but the prelates and nobles of France declared their determination not to permit their king to part with the rights of the crown. The war therefore was resumed (1355) ; the Black Prince (as the prince of Wales was called from the

* It is not improbable that the whole scene had been previously arranged between the king and queen.

† Such of the inhabitants as were willing to swear fealty to Edward were allowed to remain. Among those who did so was Eustace de St. Pierre !

colour of his armour) opened the campaign by marching from Bordeaux at the head of sixty thousand men toward the eastern Pyrenees, wasting and destroying the country. Under the walls of Toulouse he vainly offered battle to the French forces; he then advanced and burned parts of the cities of Carcassonne and Narbonne. He returned to Bordeaux after an absence of but seven weeks, having in that short time destroyed more than five hundred cities, towns and villages.


The king meantime at the head of a gallant army had advanced from Calais to near Amiens; but king John would give no opportunity of fighting, and want of provisions obliged him to return. Tidings of the Scots having surprised Berwick and crossed the borders recalled Edward to England. At Roxburgh he purchased from Baliol his title to the crown for 5000 marks and 2000*l.* a year; he then (1356) marched through the Lothians as far as Edinburgh, with the banner of Scotland displayed before him, wasting and burning the country in all directions: want of provisions at length forced him to retire. This destructive inroad was long remembered in Scotland under the name of the 'Burnt Candlemas.'

In the autumn of this year the Black Prince, at the head of about twelve thousand men, of whom but a third were English, left Bordeaux on another plundering expedition. He crossed the Garonne at Agen, overran Querci, the Limousin, Auvergne and Berri, slaughtering the peasantry, destroying the corn, wine and provisions, and burning the farm-houses, villages and towns. Having failed in attempts on the cities of Bourges and Issoudon, he commenced his retreat through Poitou. But on coming to the village of Maupertuis, within five miles of Poitiers, he suddenly fell in with the rear of a large army led by king John in person: for this monarch, on hearing of the ravages committed by the prince, had summoned his vassals to Chartres, and crossing the Loire at Blois had ad-

vanced rapidly in order to get into his rear. "God help us!" then cried the prince, "it only remains for us to fight bravely."

The prince drew up his small army on an eminence, the sides of which were covered by vineyards intersected by hedges: a single lane, so narrow that only four horsemen could go abreast in it, led to the summit. The men-at-arms on foot, with one half of the archers out before them in the usual form of a harrow, were posted in front of the lane; the remaining archers lined the hedges at its sides. The French army, which was seven times as numerous and mainly composed of cavalry, was drawn up on a moor at the foot of the hill in three divisions, all the horsemen but three hundred knights and esquires having been made to dismount. All now was ready for the attack, when the cardinal Talleyrand Perigord appeared, and with uplifted hands implored the king to spare the effusion of Christian blood; and having obtained a reluctant permission from him, he rode to the prince to propose a negotiation. "Save my honour and the honour of my army," said Edward, "and I will hearken to any reasonable terms." He then offered to resign all his conquests, booty and prisoners, and to bind himself not to serve against France for seven years. The surrender of himself and a hundred of his knights was the only condition on which John would grant a retreat to his army: this the prince indignantly rejected. Night came on, and each side prepared for battle in the morning.

At dawn (Sept. 19) the trumpets sounded on both sides, and all hastened to their posts. The cardinal, having made a final fruitless effort on the mind of the king, rode to apprise the prince, who replied with calmness, "God defend the right!" The minister of peace departed. The first division of the French, led by the marshals D'Andreghen and Clermont, at the head of the three hundred horsemen, entered the lane unopposed; but when they were advanced



some way, the word was given, and from both sides and with increasing rapidity the English arrows were showered on them. Men and horses fell in heaps; some knights dashed through the lane, others through the hedges, and emerged on different spots of the open upper ground; but still the arrows flew, and one marshal was slain and the other unhorsed and taken. The rearmost retreated to their second division, which was led by three of the king's sons: but the archers now advanced and assailed it in front, while a body of six hundred men, led by the Captal de Buche, came from an adjacent hill and fell on its left flank. It wavered; the lords who had charge of the young princes sent them off the field with a large escort; the rest of the division then broke and fled. "Sir," cried sir John Chandos to the prince, "the field is won, let us mount and charge the French king. I know him for a dauntless knight, who will never flee from an enemy: the attempt may be a bloody one, but, please God and St. George, he will be ours." Instantly they mount, and pouring down the lane emerge on the moor. The duke of Athens, the constable of France, advanced to meet them: he and most of his followers were slain in a few minutes. A body of German cavalry was next dispersed; the king urged by despair then led up his division on foot. He long fought with fruitless valour; his nobles had fallen by his side; he had received two wounds in the face, and had been beaten to the ground. Every one was anxious to seize him: a young knight advanced, and falling on his knee implored him to surrender to save his life. "Where is my cousin the prince of Wales?" demanded the king. "He is not here," replied the knight. "Who then are you?" "Denis de Morbeque of Artois, one obliged to serve the king of England, being banished from France." The king gave him his sword; his son Philip also became a prisoner.

In the battle the prince of Wales had shown the valour of a hero; his conduct after the victory has gained him

fame of a higher and purer order. When the captive monarch was led to the tent which he had caused to be pitched for himself on the field of battle, he came forth to meet him with every mark of courtesy and respect; his own victory he ascribed entirely to chance; the king, he said, had that day won 'the prize and garland' of chivalry. At table he waited on him, declaring himself, as a subject, not entitled to the honour of sitting with him. He led his royal captive to Bordeaux, and having concluded a truce for two years with the Dauphin*, he embarked in the spring (1357) for England. He landed with his prisoners at Sandwich, and thence proceeded to London. As he approached (May 24) the people poured forth to meet him; arches were thrown across the streets, tapestries and costly stuffs were hung from the windows. The captive monarch rode on a cream-coloured charger splendidly caparisoned, the victor appeared on a small pony at his side. The cavalcade at length reached Westminster hall, where king Edward sat amidst his prelates and nobles. He arose when John entered, embraced him, and led him to partake of a splendid banquet. The Savoy palace, and afterwards the castle of Windsor, was assigned as a residence for the French monarch and his son.

The king of Scotland had been now eleven years a captive, and Edward, thus master of the persons of the two monarchs his rivals, and hopeless of conquering their kingdoms, resolved to derive what advantages he could from their present situation. Negotiations had long been going on with the Scottish king and nation, and it was finally arranged (Oct. 3), that "sir David king of Scotland," as Edward now condescended to call him, should be set at liberty, on his engaging to pay 100,000 marks, in twenty

* The province of Dauphiné had been left to the late king Philip by its last prince, on condition of the heir-apparent to the throne of France being thenceforth styled the Dauphin.

half-yearly instalments, and giving the heirs of his principal nobility as hostages.

The condition of France after the fatal battle of Poitiers induced Edward to make larger demands on the other captive monarch. The authority of the Dauphin was little heeded; the states-general, when assembled, insisted on large measures of reform; the populace of Paris, headed by Marcel their mayor, committed great excesses, and their example was followed in the other great towns; the mercenaries who had served under Edward, left without pay or employment, divided into numerous bands, and ravaged and pillaged the towns and country in a terrific manner. To complete the misery, the serfs or peasantry, long goaded and exasperated by the tyranny and cruelty of their lords, rose in arms, and, as was to be expected from men who were brutally ignorant and maddened by oppression, committed every atrocity that the foulest imagination can conceive*.

Under these circumstances (1359), king John, after much hesitation, consented to the terms which his captor imposed, namely, the restoration of the provinces which had belonged to the crown of England, to be held in absolute sovereignty. A treaty to this effect was made (Mar. 24); but when it was transmitted to France, it was unanimously and indignantly rejected by the states. Edward then, complaining of their insincerity, bade them prepare for war at the end of the truce.

In the autumn (Oct. 28), king Edward passed over to Calais with a gallant army. The mercenary soldiery crowded to his standard, and at the head of a force of a hundred thousand men, arranged in three divisions, he entered the French territories. Having ravaged Picardy, he advanced to Champagne, where he laid siege to Rheims,

* This insurrection was named the *Jacquerie*, from *Jacques*, a common name among the peasants.

the city where the coronations of the kings of France were held, intending to have that ceremony performed on himself; but it was gallantly defended against him by the archbishop, and he was obliged to retire. He then led his host into Burgundy, whose duke purchased a truce for 50,000 marks: then following the course of the Seine, he appeared before the gates of Paris. But though it was now the spring (1360), the severity of the season was such, that, joined with the want of provisions, it forced him to retire with the precipitation of a flight toward Brittany. In the vicinity of Chartres (Apr. 13) the English army was exposed to one of the most dreadful tempests of wind, hail, thunder and lightning on record; and the king is said, in an agony of remorse, to have stretched his arms toward the cathedral, and to have vowed to God and the Virgin to refuse no terms of peace compatible with his honour.

The negotiations, which had still been pending, now went on with vigour, and at length (May 8) a treaty named the 'Great Peace' was signed at Bretigni, by which the king of England agreed to resign all claim to the crown of France, or to Normandy, Anjou, Maine, and Touraine, and to restore all his conquests except Calais and Guisnes; but he was to retain Poitou and Guienne and their dependencies, and Ponthieu the inheritance of his mother, in full sovereignty; a ransom of three million crowns of gold was to be paid for king John in the course of six years. Edward then set out for England, and John was sent over to Calais, at which place (Oct. 24) the two kings met, and solemnly ratified the treaty, and the latter was restored to liberty. But though John was enabled to put the king of England in possession of the ceded provinces, he could not readily overcome the repugnance of his son and nobles to the renunciation of his sovereignty over them, and the poverty of the country moreover prevented him from paying up the instalments of his ransom. On these and other accounts he resolved to pay a visit to England; and when

his council endeavoured to dissuade him, he nobly replied, that if honour were banished from the rest of the earth she should find an abode in the breast of princes. He was received with the utmost affection and respect by Edward, and lodged in the palace of the Savoy ; but he shortly after fell sick and died, and his remains were sent for interment with those of his ancestors at St. Denis (Apr. 8, 1364).

Charles the dauphin, on succeeding to the crown, adhered to the peace of Bretigni, disadvantageous to him as some of its provisions were. He also, when Charles of Blois was slain at the battle of Auray in Brittany, acknowledged the title and received the homage of the young count of Montfort. The chief difficulty which he had to contend with arose from the mercenaries of king Edward, who now to the number, it is said, of forty thousand divided into numerous bands, calling themselves the 'Free Companies,' and under different leaders spread their ravages over all parts of the kingdom. They defeated the troops sent against them ; they set at nought the papal excommunications. At length a favourable occasion presented itself for getting rid of these ferocious marauders.

Peter IV. of Castile, justly named the Cruel, had from the time when he ascended the throne been guilty of numerous murders from various motives. Among his victims were his father's mistress, Leonora de Guzman, and three of her sons ; the two remaining sons escaped into France, and as Peter was accused of having poisoned his queen, a French princess, it was resolved to aid Henry, one of the exiles, against the tyrant. The celebrated Breton knight Bertrand du Guesclin was directed to treat with the leaders of the Companies ; many French knights crowded to his standard ; and at the head of thirty thousand men he entered Spain, and without a battle placed Henry on the throne of Castile. Peter fled to Corunna, and thence to Bayonne, whence he proceeded to Bordeaux to solicit the aid of the Black Prince, who, under the title of prince of

Aquitaine, ruled from the Loire to the Pyrenees. The royal murderer met with a most gracious reception; his lavish promises were gladly listened to; secret orders were sent to the Companies, twelve thousand of whom under sir Robert Calverly and sir Richard Knowles returned to Guienne. Though it was the depth of winter, Edward entered Spain at the head of thirty thousand cavalry, and on the 3rd of the following April (1367) he engaged and defeated the army of Henry on the plain of Navarete. All Castile submitted to Peter; but the ungrateful tyrant mocked at his engagements to his ally, and the prince returned to Bordeaux, baffled in hope, and with a constitution materially injured. The crimes of Peter however did not go unpunished; he fell the following year by the dagger of his brother Henry.

In consequence of the bad faith of Peter, the prince of Wales was now deeply in debt. To raise money he imposed a hearth-tax on his subjects, which some paid with great reluctance, while the count of Armagnac and others appealed to Charles as their superior lord, the renunciations having never been completed. After some delay this prudent monarch sent a summons to the prince, as duke of Aquitaine, to appear before his court. He replied that he would, but that it should be at the head of sixty thousand men. This however was but an empty boast, for his power was gone. War was declared; the French troops entered Ponthieu, Poitou and Guienne; the people were generally in their favour; Chandos the constable of Guienne was slain in one action, his successor the Captal de Buche captured in another. The state of his health obliged the prince to return to England. English armies to no purpose marched through and ravaged various parts of France; nothing finally (1374) remained to the English but Calais, Bordeaux, Bayonne, and some places on the Dordogne.

The brilliant reign of Edward closed in gloom. The



Black Prince after his return, finding all the powers of the state in the hands of his brother the duke of Lancaster, and being either jealous of him or really disapproving of his conduct, put himself at the head of the opposition in what was called the 'Good Parliament' from the number of reforms which it endeavoured to effect*. But after lingering a few years, this gallant prince died (1376), in the forty-sixth year of his age, leaving behind him the character of a skilful commander, a wise statesman and an accomplished knight†, rivalled by no man of the time except his illustrious father. He was interred in the cathedral of Canterbury, where his tomb may still be seen.

The Black Prince, who had espoused his cousin Joan, called the 'Fair Maid of Kent,' daughter and heiress of the earl of Kent who had been put to death by Mortimer, and widow of sir Thomas Holland (by whom she had children), left by her an only son, named Richard of Bordeaux from the place of his birth. This young prince was declared heir to the throne.

The king himself soon followed his renowned son to the grave. He spent the closing years of his life in retirement, first at Eltham and then at Shene. After the death of queen Philippa, a lady of her bedchamber named Alice Perrers, a married woman, had acquired great influence over him. He gave her all the jewels of the deceased queen, and she disposed of the royal favours in such a manner, that an especial ordinance of parliament was made to restrain her. This woman was with the king through his last illness. On the morning of the day on which he died, she drew, we are told, the ring from his finger and left him; his servants then fell to pillaging the palace; the dying monarch lay alone and unheeded, till a benevolent priest came to his bedside, warned him of his situation, and

* It gave the first example of parliamentary impeachment of persons in office.

† See Appendix (S).

bade him prepare to meet his Creator. Edward had just strength enough to thank him and to take a crucifix in his hands, which he kissed with tears, and then breathed his last (June 21, 1377).

Thus terminated the life and reign of Edward III., the most glorious (in the vulgar sense) which our history presents. The monarch had lived sixty-four and reigned fifty years. Never was there a prince more fitted to gain the affections of a proud high-spirited people; he was brave, chivalrous and generous; he delighted in the sports of the field, and the martial conflicts of the lists; his domestic administration was at once vigorous and prudent, and his victories in war cast a halo of splendour around his brows. As such he appeared to his contemporaries; to us he perhaps shows with still more lustre in the picturesque pages of Froissart, where he occupies so prominent a station.

By his queen Philippa of Hainault, who died in 1369, Edward had seven sons and five daughters. Of these sons two died in infancy; the Black Prince and his next brother, Lionel duke of Clarence*, died also before their father: this last, who had married the heiress of De Burgh earl of Ulster, left an only daughter, who married Edmund Mortimer earl of March. Edward's remaining sons were John of Gaunt (Ghent) duke of Lancaster, Edmund earl of Cambridge, and Thomas earl of Buckingham.

Though, as we have already observed, we must morally condemn the aggressions of Edward on France, and we see that with all the waste of blood and treasure no acquisition of importance was made, yet it is probable that the moral effect on the nation was good. Great victories elevate the tone of national feeling, and inspire a lofty consciousness of strength. They foster a spirit of noble daring and of generous self-reliance, and possibly Creci had no mean effect in forming the military character of England. But

* The title of *duke* occurs now for the first time in our history.



however this may be, the constitution gained by the wars of Edward. To obtain the money which they required he was forced to convoke frequent parliaments. With each grant of supply the commons, as was then the mode, sent a petition for the redress of some grievance, and though perhaps baffled at the time, they returned again and again to the charge, and in most cases finally succeeded. Three great principles were now fully established, namely, that money should not be raised without the consent of parliament; that no alteration of the laws should be made without the concurrence of both houses; that the commons might inquire into abuses and impeach ministers. The law of treason passed in this reign (25 Edw. III.), and which is still the law, was a measure of the greatest importance. By it treason is limited to three cases: Compassing the death of the king; Levying war against him; Aiding his foreign enemies within his kingdom. The assembly by whom this statute was enacted was not without reason named 'The Blessed Parliament.'

According to a most competent authority (sir Matthew Hale) "the law was in this reign improved to its greatest height. The judges and pleaders were very learned. The pleadings are more polished than those in the time of Edward II., yet they have neither uncertainty, prolixity, nor obscurity. So that at the latter part of this king's reign the law seemed to be near its meridian." By a statute (36 Edw. III.) it was ordained that in pleadings and public deeds the English language should be employed in place of the French.

This great monarch may perhaps also be styled the father of English commerce. In 1331 he invited over a number of the Flemish artisans who were disgusted with the oppressive spirit evinced by their corporations. He settled them in Norfolk, and they introduced the manufacture of the finer woollen cloths, which had been hitherto unknown in England. Edward had some difficulty in

protecting them against the selfish spirit of the English corporations*.

However pious Edward may have been, he was no abject slave to Rome. He withheld the tribute of 1000 marks a year extorted from John; and when the pope Urban V. threatened the usual vengeance, he laid the affair before his parliament, who put a final end to the matter by declaring that John had no right to bind his kingdom without its consent, adding that they would stand by the king if the pope attempted to enforce his claim. Again, the Peterpence had long since been commuted to a certain sum, but as England was now become much more populous, the pope wished to levy it in the original manner; he found however the resistance too strong, and he gave up the project. The rapacity of the papal court at this time exceeded all measure, and between first-fruits and other devices of its chancery the taxes levied by it in England, it was said, far exceeded those paid to the crown; and as by what were called *provisions*† the pope assumed the right of nominating to vacant benefices, which he conferred on Italians and other foreigners, the revenues of a large portion of the church were annually remitted to these pluralists, who perhaps never set their foot in the kingdom. To remedy this evil the statute of Provisors was passed (27 Edw. III.), making it penal to procure any presentation from the church of Rome, and another outlawing any one who carried an appeal to Rome. Parliament even went so far as to speak of expelling the papal authority by force, and thus ridding themselves of its intolerable oppressions‡.

* See Hallam, Middle Ages, iii. 379. "The history of Corporations," observes this able writer, "brings home to our minds one cardinal truth, that political institutions have very frequently but a relative and temporary usefulness, and that what forwarded improvement during one part of its course may prove to it in time a most pernicious obstacle." This observation applies still more strongly to monasteries.

† See above, p. 209.

‡ "Men," says Hume, "who talked in this strain were not far from the Reformation."

This was an age of architectural splendour. The stately castle of Windsor was built by Edward. Each county was assessed in a certain number of carpenters, masons and tylers, and thus the magnificent edifice rose by the compulsory labour of the people, like the Pyramids of ancient Egypt.

In this reign (1349) England was desolated by the great plague which then spread its ravages over the whole of Europe. It is said to have carried off a third of the population. The supply of labour not equalling the demand after it ceased, the natural result was a general rise of wages; but the commons grudging the poor this slight improvement in their condition had a law passed limiting wages to what they had been before the plague. It is needless to say that this law was not and could not be observed.

The order of the Garter was instituted by Edward. The tradition is that the countess of Salisbury having dropt her garter when dancing, the king picked it up, and seeing the courtiers smile he said, *Honi soit qui mal y pense* ('Shamed be he who thinketh ill thereof'), which became the motto of the order.

CHAPTER VIII.

RICHARD II. (OF BORDEAUX.)*

1377—1399.

Insurrection of the peasantry.—Power of the duke of Gloucester.—Richard's expedition to Ireland.—Murder of Gloucester.—The king absolute.—Norfolk and Hereford.—Return of Hereford.—Capture of the king ;—his deposition.—Wickliffe.

RICHARD was only in his eleventh year when the death of his renowned grandfather placed him on the throne of England. The principle of representation was now so fully established and the memory of his father was so dear to the nation that the slightest opposition to his succession was not to be apprehended. He was crowned with great solemnity (July 16) at Westminster. The following day a council of regency was appointed ; the duke of Lancaster, contrary to expectation, giving no opposition. The war with France and Castile, which still continued, made it necessary to convene a parliament, and its proceedings show clearly the influence which the commons were gradually acquiring†.

The events of the war with France at this time offer little to interest, for Charles the Wise was too prudent a man to put anything to hazard. It however brought on expense, and the king was obliged to apply to his parliament for supplies. Instead of the old mode of granting tenths and fifteenths, it was resolved to have recourse to the new expedient of a poll-tax of three groats a head for every person, male and female, of fifteen years and upwards ; but to ease the poor it was directed that the aggregate sum in

* Authorities :—Walsingham, Knighton and Froissart.

† See the particulars in Lingard and in Hallam (*Middle Ages*, iii. 85 *seq.*):

particular places should be so apportioned as to be levied at from one to sixty groats according to the substance of the parties. The levying of this tax however gave occasion to a dangerous insurrection of the people (1381).

For centuries the condition of the inferior ranks of the people throughout the greater part of Europe had been that of villanage, or predial bondage, somewhat similar to what prevails at the present day in Russia. But knowledge had been secretly shedding its light even on the low places of society; the equal and beneficent spirit which the Gospel breathes had imperceptibly penetrated all ranks; kings and nobles had been gradually emancipating their serfs; the clergy, who were mostly of plebeian origin themselves, as judges in the courts of law and equity favoured emancipation, and as religious teachers frequently dwelt on the equality of all portions of a sinful race in the eyes of a just and beneficent Deity. The extent of commerce and the consequent wealth of the inhabitants of towns, and their importance in the eyes of monarchs and nobles, had given a kind of elevation to all parts of the commonalty; and even the rude serfs of the country felt their natural rights, and panted beneath the oppression of their lords after a state of freedom for which they were not perhaps yet fully qualified. This general fermentation had in 1357 broken out in the atrocities of the *Jacquerie* in France, and it now (1381) exhibited itself though in a less appalling form in England, where since the Norman conquest the condition of the inferior ranks had gradually deteriorated, and the descendants of the free Saxon ceorles had nearly sunk to the abject state of the serfs of the continent.

The collection of the poll-tax was first resisted in Essex, where the people rose under the guidance of a priest, who assumed the name of Jack Straw. At Dartford in Kent one of the collectors demanded the tax for a young girl, the daughter of a tyler. Her mother asserting that she was under fifteen, the brutal collector laid hold of the girl, and

was proceeding to give a very indecent proof of the truth of his assertion, when her father came in from his work, and raising the implement which he happened to have in his hand struck the collector dead at a blow. His neighbours applauded and vowed to stand by him, and the surrounding villages soon joined in the common cause. The whole of Kent speedily rose. At Maidstone the people forced the archbishop's prison and liberated a priest named John Ball, who was confined in it for preaching against the wealth and corruption of the church. Wat the Tyler was now their acknowledged leader; they were joined by the Essex insurgents under Jack Straw. They advanced towards London, and at Blackheath (June 10) their tumultuary bands had swollen, it is said, to the number of one hundred thousand men. Here Ball, taking for his text the following rimes, then highly popular among them,


When Adam dalf [delved] and Evè span
Who was then the gentleman?

preached on the natural equality of man, and declared that the archbishop, the earls, barons, judges, lawyers, etc. must be all destroyed and all ranks abolished, and that then alone all would be equally free and noble. The multitude loudly applauded, and vowed that Ball himself should be archbishop of Canterbury and lord chancellor*. The insurrection rapidly spread through the eastern counties. The insurgents pillaged the houses of the gentry, burned the court-rolls, and cut off the head of every justice, lawyer and juror that fell into their hands†.

While the insurgents lay at Blackheath (11th) the king's mother had to pass through them on her return from a pilgrimage to Canterbury. By her address and a few kisses bestowed on the leaders she passed uninjured, and

* The primate was chancellor at this time. It is amusing to observe how men cannot divest themselves of their original ideas; while vowing to abolish all ranks and offices they talked of conferring the highest on their leaders.

† See Appendix (T).




then proceeded to join her son in the Tower. Next morning (12th) the king went down in his barge to receive the petitions of the insurgents, who were now at Rotherhithe; but they set up such shouts and cries when he appeared that his attendants fearing for his safety carried him back to the Tower. Tyler then led his men into Southwark, where they broke open the Marshalsea and King's Bench and liberated the prisoners; they also destroyed the furniture and burned the records in the episcopal palace at Lambeth.

Next morning (13th) the insurgents passed London-bridge and entered the city, where they were joined by the populace. After regaling themselves at the cost of the wealthy citizens they commenced their devastations. Newgate was speedily broken open and its inmates were set at liberty; the duke of Lancaster's splendid palace, the Savoy, was plundered and destroyed; the Temple with all the books and records it contained was burnt. Strict orders were given that no one should keep any part of the plunder, and one man who had concealed a silver cup in his bosom was flung with it into the Thames. The plate which they seized was cut into small pieces, the precious stones were beaten to powder. "With whom holdest thou?" was the question put to every one whom they met, and if he did not reply "With king Richard and the commons," his head was struck off. They also made people swear to admit no king "who was called John," alluding to the duke of Lancaster. The Flemings were the chief objects of their vengeance; they dragged them even out of the churches and beheaded them. So passed this day; the next morning (14th) their multitudes covered Tower-hill, loudly demanding the heads of the chancellor and the treasurer. A herald then made proclamation for them to retire to Mile-end, where the king would meet them and grant their demands. The ground soon was cleared; the gates were opened; the young monarch issued with a small train and rode to Mile-end followed by sixty thou-

sand of the multitude. Their demands were: the abolition of slavery; liberty to buy and sell in market-towns without toll or custom; a fixed rent of fourpence the acre for land instead of the services of villanage; and a general pardon. These terms were at once acceded to, and thirty clerks were employed during the night in making copies of the charter which was granted. The multitude, who were mostly men of Herts and Essex, then returned to their homes bearing the royal banner.

While the king was at Mile-end Tyler had burst with four hundred of his men into the Tower and murdered the archbishop, the treasurer and some other obnoxious persons. They forced their way into the apartment of the princess, and even probed her bed with their swords to try if any one was concealed in it. She fainted, and was conveyed by her attendants over the river, where she was joined soon after by her son.

The king next morning (15th) rode into the city with a train of but sixty horsemen. As he was crossing Smithfield he met Tyler at the head of twenty thousand men, who making a sign to them to halt rode boldly up to the king to confer with him. Tyler was observed as they spoke to play as it were with his dagger, and he then laid hold on the king's bridle. William Walworth the lord mayor instantly drew a short sword and stabbed him in the throat; he rode back a few paces and fell, and Stan-dish one of the king's esquires despatched him. The insurgents bent their bows to avenge him, when the king with wonderful presence of mind galloped up to them crying, "What are ye about, my lieges? Tyler was a traitor. Come with me, I will be your leader." They followed him to Islington, whither sir Robert Knowles soon came with a body of one thousand horse to protect the king; they fell on their knees suing for mercy; some were for falling on and slaughtering them, but the king steadily refused his consent and directed them to return to their homes in peace.



The nobility and gentry, who in their terror had at first shut themselves up in their houses and castles, now took courage and repaired to the king, who finding himself at the head of forty thousand men, in compliance with the desires of these lords,—whose conduct justifies the severe remark of a modern historian* that “the masters of slaves on such occasions seem anxious to prove that they are not of a race superior in any moral quality to the meanest of their bondmen,”—issued (July 2) a proclamation revoking all the charters he had granted. The hangman was instantly set to work; Ball, Straw and about fifteen hundred others were executed. Straw it is said confessed before his execution that their intention had been to massacre all the possessioners, that is, beneficed clergy, and leave none but the mendicant friars, who would suffice for all the purposes of religion†.

The energy and presence of mind shown by a youth of but sixteen on this occasion gave great hopes of the king, and his marriage the following year (1382) with the daughter of the king of Bohemia, a lady of such eminent goodness and virtue that she was long remembered under the name of the ‘good queen Anne’, helped to augment the pleasing illusion. But the defects of the king’s own character and the ambition of his uncles gradually dispelled the hopes that were entertained of a prosperous reign.

In the year 1384, when the duke of Lancaster was on his return from an expedition into Scotland, the charges of disloyalty which had been more than once made against him were renewed, and a Carmelite friar put into the king’s hand written proofs of a real or pretended conspiracy to place him on the throne. Lancaster swore it was false and offered to prove his innocence by wager of battle; the friar was given in custody to sir John Holland, the king’s half-

* Mackintosh, i. 320.

† We must recollect that all these details are furnished by Walsingham and Knighton, two inveterate enemies of the insurgents.

brother, and on the morning that he was to be produced he was found hanging dead in his chamber. Some accused his keeper of the deed, others said it was his own act. The lord Zouch, whom the friar had named as the author of the memorial, denied all knowledge of it. Lancaster went over to France, and on his return shut himself up in his castle of Pontefract till the king's mother brought about a reconciliation. This was followed by an expedition into Scotland; for as the Scots, aided by a body of French auxiliaries, had crossed the borders, the king entered Scotland with eighty thousand men and laid it waste.

During this expedition the king made his uncles the earls of Cambridge and Buckingham dukes of York and Gloucester, and Henry son of the duke of Lancaster and Edward son to the duke of York earls of Derby and Rutland. On the other hand he created his favourite, Robert Vere, earl of Oxford, marquess of Dublin, and granted him the revenues of Ireland for life on condition of his paying 5000 marks a year into the exchequer; and Michael de la Pole, the son of a London merchant, whom he had made chancellor, was created earl of Suffolk. At the same time Roger earl of March, grandson of Lionel duke of Clarence, was declared heir presumptive to the crown. The affairs of the Spanish peninsula, where the duke of Lancaster claimed the crown of Castile in right of his wife*, calling him over to that country, Richard willingly consented to his departure, and gave him one half of the supply voted for the year by parliament.

But the king soon had reason to regret the absence of the duke of Lancaster; for Gloucester, a man of strong passions and great ambition, fomented the animosity of the nobility against the favourites, and when a parliament met (1386) on account of a menaced invasion of France,

* Lancaster and his brother the earl of Cambridge married the two daughters and co-heiresses of Peter the Cruel.

both lords and commons united in a petition for the removal of the ministers. Richard having vainly tried to rouse the citizens of London, retired to his palace at Eltham. The parliament sent urging their petition; he insolently replied that he would not at their desire remove the meanest scullion in his kitchen. He was however obliged to give way and dismiss his ministers, stipulating that none of them but Suffolk should be molested. This nobleman was forthwith impeached by the commons*. On most of the charges he was acquitted, on others he was found guilty, and he was sentenced to pay various sums and to be imprisoned during the royal pleasure. It was now proposed to go a step further, and, as had been done in the times of John, his son and Edward II., to establish a council for the reformation of the state. Richard steadily refused to part with his power, and threatened to dissolve the parliament; the commons to terrify him directed the act of deposition of Edward II. to be produced. At length the king was assured that if he continued obstinate the lords and commons would separate and leave him to himself. He then gave way, and agreed to appoint a commission of fourteen prelates and peers to regulate the affairs of the kingdom for twelve months. The duke of Gloucester was at the head of the commission, and nearly all the members of it were his creatures. At the end of the session (Nov. 28) Richard made a solemn and open protest against anything done in that parliament to the prejudice of the rights of the crown.

Richard, who was certainly a prince of 'spirit, could hardly be expected to submit tamely to this virtual deposition. Having vainly tried (1387) to induce the sheriffs of counties to influence the next elections in his favour, he assembled the principal judges at Nottingham (Aug. 25), and put several queries to them respecting the legality

* This is the second instance of the impeachment of a minister by the commons (see above, p. 294). It is of far more importance than the former.

of the late commission. They pronounced it to be illegal, and those concerned in procuring it to be traitors. They set their seals to this answer and swore to keep it secret. The very next day however one of them betrayed it to the king's brother the earl of Kent, by whom the intelligence was conveyed to the duke of Gloucester.

The commission being to terminate on the 19th of November, the king entered London on the 10th to be ready to resume his authority, and he had arranged measures for taking vengeance on those who were obnoxious to him. But next day he learned to his consternation that Gloucester and some other lords were near Highgate at the head of forty thousand men. Resistance was not to be thought of; the five leaders, Gloucester, his nephew Derby, Fitzalan earl of Arundel, Mowbray earl of Nottingham, and Beauchamp earl of Warwick, came before the king in Westminster-hall (17th), and *appealed* (*i. e.* accused) of treason the archbishop of York, the duke of Ireland as Vere now was styled, the earl of Suffolk, sir Robert Tresilian the chief-justice, and sir Nicholas Bramber late lord-mayor of London, and casting their gauntlets on the floor, offered to prove the charges by single combat. Richard replied that he would summon a parliament in which justice should be done, and he and the appellants parted apparently on friendly terms. The five accused persons, knowing their destruction to be inevitable, sought to save themselves by flight. Suffolk got over to France, where he died soon after; the archbishop concealed himself near Newcastle, Tresilian in London; Bramber was taken. The duke of Ireland retired to Cheshire, and having by direction of the king raised a body of men advanced toward London; but he was met and baffled at Radcot-bridge by the forces led by Gloucester and Derby, and he fled first to Ireland and then to the Low Countries, where he died. When Gloucester returned to London a parliament met (1388) and the impeachments were proceeded with. Tre-

silian, who had concealed himself in the house of an apothecary opposite the palace, was betrayed by a servant, and that very evening he was executed at Tyburn. Next day Bramber shared his fate. The judges who had answered the king's questions were then condemned to death; their lives however were spared at the intercession of the bishops, but they were banished for life to different cities of Ireland. The same was the fate of the bishop of Chichester, the king's confessor. Sir Simon Burley, sir John Beauchamp, sir James Berners and sir John Salisbury were next impeached as aiders of the aforesaid traitors, and all were executed. Burley had been appointed by the Black Prince governor to his son, whose marriage also he had negotiated. Richard entreated Gloucester in his favour, but he was told to leave him to his fate if he wished to keep his crown. The queen fell on her knees before the tyrant and supplicated in vain; even Derby could not move his ruthless resolve. The only favour shown was the change of hanging into decapitation*. The work of blood being ended, the Wonderful (or as others called it the Merciless) Parliament was dissolved (June 3) †.

Gloucester and his party held the reins of government for nearly twelve months longer; but their power was gradually crumbling away, and by a bold effort the king at once overthrew it. At a great council holden after Easter (1389) he turned suddenly to the duke of Gloucester and asked him how old he was. "Your highness," he replied, "is in your twenty-second year." "Then," said the king, "I must surely be old enough to manage my own affairs. I have been longer under tutors than any wards in my dominions. I thank you, my lords, for your past services but require them no longer." No opposition


* The reversal of Burley's sentence in the following reign proves its injustice.

† In this year (Aug. 9) the battle of Otterburne, celebrated in the ballads, was fought between the Percies and Douglas.

was attempted; he appointed a new chancellor and treasurer, and a proclamation informed the people that he had resumed the government.

During eight years the king ruled without opposition. He seemed perfectly reconciled to his uncles and their friends, and what was very remarkable in those times he remitted to his subjects some subsidies which had been granted to him. On the death of the good queen Anne (1394) he was induced to seek to divert his melancholy by visiting Ireland, where since the weakening of the English power by the invasion of Edward Bruce the native tribes had greatly encroached on the British settlers, and many of these last had abandoned their own laws and language for those of the Irish. He landed at Waterford with four thousand men-at-arms and thirty thousand archers, a force not to be resisted, and thence marched to Dublin. All the native chiefs and degenerate English submitted and were received to favour. Grievances were redressed and oppressive officers removed. He then returned to London and concluded a truce for twenty-five years with the king of France. Early in the next year (1396) he was married to Isabella the daughter of that monarch, a child only in her eighth year, and in the following month of January the infant queen was crowned at Westminster.

This treaty and marriage were vehemently reprobated by the duke of Gloucester, who dilating on the glories of the late reign, spoke sneeringly of the luxury and inactivity of the present. He had never cordially cultivated the goodwill of the king, who for his part had never forgiven his former conduct. With his two other uncles and their sons Richard was now on the best terms. York had never offended him, and age had chilled the fire of Lancaster; the king had likewise lately obliged him by legitimating his offspring by Catherine Swynford, the widow of a knight whom his duchess had employed to educate her



children, and who during the life of the duchess had borne him three sons and a daughter*. The eldest of these children was created earl of Somerset, but it was expressly stated in the act of legitimation that they were to have no claim to the crown. Richard therefore felt himself strong enough (1397) to take his long-projected vengeance on Gloucester. He went himself in person (July 12) to the duke's castle at Pleshy; Gloucester and his family came out to receive him; the king directed the earl-marshal Nottingham to arrest him and convey him to the Tower. But when they reached the Thames on their way, the earl hurried his prisoner on board of a vessel which lay ready and conveyed him to Calais, of which place he was governor. The earls of Arundel and Warwick were arrested in the same treacherous manner and confined in different castles. To quiet the people proclamation was made that all had been done with the assent of the dukes of Lancaster and York, their sons and other nobles. At Nottingham, a few days after, the king made some of these noblemen appeal the duke and his two friends of treason; and in about three weeks sir William Rickhill, one of the justices of the Common Pleas, was called up in the middle of the night and ordered to repair instantly to Calais. On his arrival there a commission was given him to interrogate the duke of Gloucester, whom he had supposed to be dead, a report to that effect having been spread. He used the precaution of having two witnesses present at his interview with the duke, and he advised him to give his answer in writing and to keep a copy. Gloucester gave him what he called his confession and bade him return in the morning, but Rickhill was not permitted to see him any more.


Richard had meantime (Sept. 17) returned with a strong force to London. The sheriffs had taken care to have a

* They were named Beaufort, from a castle of that name in France where they were born.

parliament such as he required returned. All pardons granted to the accused were revoked. They were appealed of having forced the king to assent to the commission of regency in 1387 and for their subsequent acts. Arundel pleaded both a general and a special pardon; his defence was not admitted; he was condemned and beheaded that very day. Warwick was also condemned to death, but the sentence was commuted to exile in the Isle of Man; the primate, Arundel's brother, was banished; lord Cobham was exiled to Jersey; lord Mortimer, who had taken refuge with the native Irish, was outlawed. Orders had been sent to the earl-marshal to bring over the duke of Gloucester to answer the charges made against him. His answer came that he could not do so as the duke had died in prison. The lords-appellant demanded judgement, the commons petitioned to the same effect; the duke was then declared a traitor and his property confiscate. Next day his confession which had been taken by sir William Rickhill was read in parliament.


The very opportune death of the duke is certainly somewhat mysterious, such deaths in those times being rarely natural. It was never supposed that he destroyed himself; Froissart was told that he was strangled. Hall, a servant of the governor, made confession in the next reign that he was present when the duke was smothered between two beds; and though doubt has been thrown on these accounts, the probability, we might perhaps say the certainty, still is that the duke was murdered by order of the king his nephew.

Having thus gratified his vengeance in violation of all law and justice, the king proceeded to secure himself for the future in the exercise of his power. To attach the princes he made his cousins Derby and Rutland dukes of Hereford and Albemarle, his brothers Kent and Huntingdon dukes of Surrey and Exeter; Nottingham was created duke of Norfolk; Somerset marquess of Dorset; the lords




Despenser, Neville, Percy and William Scroop earls of Gloucester, Westmoreland, Worcester and Wiltshire. To give the greater security to all concerned in the late proceedings the peers and commons were made to swear at the end of the session to maintain all the acts of the present parliament. A subsidy on wool was granted to the king for life. A standing commission of twelve peers and six commoners was then appointed, who were to exercise all the powers of the legislature. "The king now," says Froissart, "began to rule more fiercely than before;" he maintained a force of ten thousand archers; none high or low dared to oppose his will; his ministers and favourites encouraged him in all his excesses; he passed his days in feasting and revelry, and in the enjoyment of low and trivial pleasures. The people murmured at the proceedings of the late parliament; and many of the nobles, when they calmly reviewed the dissimulation and treachery of the king in the case of his uncle, and the contempt of law and justice which he had exhibited in that affair, felt rather uncertain of their own safety.

Of the lords-appellant in the tenth year of the king (1387) Hereford and Norfolk alone remained. In the month of December the latter overtook the former on the road from Brentford to London, and as they rode along he said to him (as reported by Hereford), "We are like to be undone." "For what?" "For the affair of Radcot-bridge." "How can that be since he has pardoned us?" "Nevertheless our fate will be like that of others before us; he will annul the record." Norfolk then proceeded to declare that to his knowledge Surrey, Wiltshire and Salisbury were sworn to destroy them and some others, and added that he could not trust the king's oath. This conversation, it is easy to conceive how, reached the ears of the king. He sent for Hereford and charged him on his allegiance to repeat it before the council. On the opening of the next parliament (Jan. 30, 1398) Hereford,




who had already obtained a full pardon, appeared as the prosecutor of Norfolk. This nobleman, who had not attended parliament, surrendered on proclamation, and before the king at Oswaldstre he denied the charge and denounced the accuser as a liar and a false traitor. Richard ordered them both into custody; and as no witnesses could be produced it was determined by a court of chivalry held at Windsor that the decision should be left to the judgement of God by wager of battle at Coventry on the 16th of September. On that day the combatants appeared in the lists, in the presence of the king, the committee of parliament and a great multitude of the people. The lances were in rest, the combat was about to begin, when the king flung down his warder [truncheon] and forbade the battle. The two dukes retired to their seats while the king engaged in consultation. At length the royal pleasure was announced. To prevent future quarrels the duke of Hereford was to quit the kingdom and remain ten years in exile; Norfolk was to remain in exile for life in Germany, Hungary, or Bohemia, and to go as a pilgrim to the Holy Land, and his lands were to be taken into the king's hands to pay his debts to the crown, 1000*l.* a year being reserved to him. As a favour both were allowed to appoint attorneys to receive any inheritances that might fall to them during their exile. Hereford went to France, Norfolk visited the Holy Land, and on his return died of a broken heart at Venice.

Richard was now in fact an absolute monarch; he had oppressed or terrified all his opponents; the subsidy granted for life relieved him from the necessity of meeting his parliaments, while the standing committee was ready to make any ordinances he pleased. But his brilliant position was unstable; he had irretrievably lost the affections of the people by forced loans and other acts of oppression, and circumstances soon led them to turn their thoughts to his cousin Henry the banished duke of Hereford. On the



death of his father (1399) Henry at once assumed the title of duke of Lancaster ; but when he claimed the estates, Richard, asserting that exile, like outlawry, rendered incapable of inheriting property, seized them to his own use ; and the council pronounced the patents granted to him and Norfolk illegal and void. This act of flagrant injustice was Richard's ruin ; the patience of the nation was now exhausted : the friends of Henry were active ; plans of insurrection were formed ; the great lords were sounded. As if to hasten his destruction, the infatuated monarch, while the political horizon boded a tempest, set out on another expedition to Ireland to avenge the death of the earl of March, who had been slain by the native Irish. Having made the duke of York regent he sailed from Milford and landed at Waterford (May 31).


Shortly after, Henry, accompanied by the exiled primate and a few attendants, sailed with three small vessels from Vannes in Brittany and landed at Ravenspur in Yorkshire (July 4). He was immediately joined by the earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, to whom he declared on oath that he only sought to recover the honours and estates which had belonged to his father. The regent when he heard of his landing summoned the vassals of the crown to St. Albans. A numerous army assembled, but finding the leaders mostly disinclined to act against Henry, who appeared only to seek his right, he turned and moved toward Bristol, whither the earl of Wiltshire, sir John Bussy and sir Henry Green (members of the committee), who had been left in charge of the young queen, had already fled. Henry soon reached London at the head of sixty thousand men, and after a delay of a few days he followed the regent. An interview between the uncle and nephew took place in the church of the castle of Berkeley, which ended in their united forces of one hundred thousand men appearing before the castle of Bristol, the regent having been either intimidated or deceived. The castle surren-



dered; Wiltshire, Bussy and Green, as was usual in such cases, were executed without even the form of a trial. The duke of York then remained at Bristol while Henry proceeded to Chester (Aug. 8).

The state of the weather had hitherto prevented intelligence from being conveyed to the king. When he heard of what had occurred he sent the earl of Salisbury over with as many men as the ships in Dublin could carry, while he himself led the rest of his forces to Waterford. Salisbury landed at Conway, where by summoning the Welshmen to his standard he assembled a respectable force; but as the king did not appear, they dispersed after waiting for a fortnight. Richard at length (Aug. 5) landed at Milford with several thousand men, but when he arose on the second morning and looked out of his window he saw that the greater part had already deserted. He held a council with his friends; some advised that he should fly to Bordeaux; the duke of Exeter strongly objected to this course and proposed that they should proceed to join the army at Conway. This was agreed to, and in the night the king disguised as a priest, his brothers Exeter and Surrey, the bishop of Carlisle and some others stole away and set out for Conway: but here they found only Salisbury and a hundred men. It was then resolved (9th) that Surrey and Exeter should repair to Henry and learn what were his intentions. They met him at Chester: Surrey was instantly thrown into confinement; Exeter was induced to lay aside the hart, the royal badge, and assume the rose, that of Henry. To secure the person of the king Northumberland was sent with 500 men-at-arms and 1000 archers; but these he was not to let be seen, lest Richard should put to sea.

The earl having secured the castles of Flint and Rhuddlan, and placed his men under a rock a few miles from the latter, advanced to Conway with only five attendants. When admitted to the king's presence (18th) he delivered a letter from Exeter declaring that full credit might be



given to the offers he might make. These were: that Richard should promise to govern by law; that Exeter, Surrey, Salisbury and the bishop of Carlisle should stand their trial for having advised the assassination of the duke of Gloucester; that Henry should be made grand justiciary as his ancestors had been. These terms being granted Henry would come to Flint, ask pardon on his knees, and accompany the king to London. Richard accepted the terms, privately assuring his friends that he would stand by them, and take ample vengeance on his and their enemies. "Fair sirs," said he, "we will grant it to him, for I see no other way. But I swear to you that whatever assurance I may give him he shall surely be put to a bitter death, and doubt it not no parliament shall be held at Westminster. As soon as I have spoken with Henry I will summon the men of Wales and make head against him, and if he and his friends be discomfited they shall die; some of them I will flay alive."

Mass was performed; Northumberland swore on the host to observe the conditions; he departed, and after dinner the king set out for Flint. On coming to a steep declivity close to the sea he dismounted, and began to walk it down. Suddenly he stopped and cried, "I am betrayed! God of Paradise, aid me! See ye not banners and pennons below in the valley?" Northumberland now joined him but affected ignorance. "If I thought you could betray me," said the king, "it is not too late to return." "You cannot," said the earl, catching hold of his bridle, "I have promised to convey you to the duke of Lancaster." By this time one hundred lancers and two hundred archers were come up; Richard seeing escape impossible said, "May the God on whom you laid your hand reward you and your accomplices at the last day!" Then turning to his companions, "We are betrayed," said he, "but remember that our Lord also was sold, and delivered into the hands of his enemies."

At Flint the king when left with his friends reproached himself bitterly, it is said, with his former lenity to the man who had now risen up against him. Three times he averred he had pardoned him, once when even his own father would have put him to death. He passed a sleepless night; in the morning (19th) he ascended the tower and beheld Henry's army of eighty thousand men advancing. He shuddered and wept. After dinner he was summoned down to the court to meet the duke, who advancing, armed all save his head, bent his knee. "Fair cousin of Lancaster," said the king, "you are welcome." "My lord," replied the duke, "I am come before my time. But I will show you the reason. Your people complain that for twenty or two-and-twenty years you have ruled them rigorously, but if it please God I will help you to govern better." "Fair cousin, since it pleaseth you it pleaseth me well," replied the king. Henry then spoke to all but the earl of Salisbury. The king's horses were forthwith ordered; Richard and Salisbury were mounted on two sorry jades, and thus amid the sound of trumpets and shouts of the soldiers they followed the duke to Chester. Here the king was made to issue a proclamation for assembling a parliament. Henry then conducted him toward London. At Lichfield (24th) the captive monarch attempted to escape by letting himself down from his window, but he was taken in the garden. On reaching London (31st) he was placed in the Tower*.

Henry's design on the crown was now no longer concealed. He wished to cause Richard to abdicate voluntarily, and for this purpose assailed him with both promises and threats. The day before the parliament met, a deputation waited on the king and reminded him of a promise he had made at Conway to resign the crown; and on his expressing his willingness so to do, he was handed a paper

* The preceding narrative has been given by Turner and Lingard, from the manuscript accounts of two eye-witnesses.

in which he was made to absolve his subjects from their allegiance, to renounce the royal authority, and to swear that he would never act or suffer others to act in opposition to this resignation. He read it, we are told, with a cheerful countenance, and added that if he were to choose his successor it would be his cousin of Lancaster there present, to whom he then handed his ring*.

Next day (Sept. 29) the two houses met in Westminster-hall. The throne stood empty, covered with cloth of gold. Henry sat on his seat beside it. Richard's act of resignation was read amid the shouts of the attendant multitude. The coronation-oath was next read, and then followed thirty-three articles of impeachment against Richard, whose deposition was voted unanimously, and eight commissioners mounting a tribunal pronounced the sentence. Then Henry rose, and making the sign of the cross on his forehead and breast thus spoke: "In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, I, Henry of Lancaster, challenge this realm of England as I am descended by right line of blood from the good lord king Henry III.†, and through that right that God of his grace hath sent me with help of my kin and of my friends to recover it; the which realm was in point to be undone for default of government, and undoing of the good laws." His claim was at once admitted; he produced the ring of Richard; the primate then took him by the hand and led him to the throne; on the steps he knelt and prayed; the two archbishops seated him on the throne. The primate briefly addressed the assembly; Henry then rose and gave thanks to all, assuring them he would disturb the rights of property of no man; and

* Such is the account entered on the rolls of parliament, but as the entry was made in the reign of Henry, we may fairly doubt of its accuracy.

† Hardyng, a contemporary chronicler, says that he had often heard the earl of Northumberland assert that John of Gaunt had forged a chronicle to prove that Edmund (from whom he was descended in the female line) and not Edward I. was the eldest son of Henry III., but that he had been set aside on account of his deformity. Henry seems here to allude to that story.

having directed the parliament to meet again in six days and appointed new officers of the crown he retired to the palace.

Such was the mode in which the grandson of Edward III. was deprived of his throne. Far from us be the remotest thought of extenuating the baseness and treachery of Northumberland and other lords or of justifying the ambition of the duke of Lancaster; but truth compels us to declare that Richard was rejected of his people, who saw no refuge from tyranny but in depriving him of his power. That his deposition was the act of the nation is not to be doubted, for no one rose on his side; the means of Lancaster were feeble in themselves, and could have achieved nothing in opposition to the wishes of a majority of the people. We must therefore regard this event as similar to a much more famous one which took place about three centuries later and to be justified on the same grounds, and therefore view in the house of Lancaster a line of rightful princes.

The deposed monarch was only in his thirty-fourth year. His features were feminine, his manners abrupt: he passionately loved show and parade, and was devoted to pleasure. At the same time he was arbitrary and tyrannical, and the deep dissimulation with which he for so many years nourished and concealed his projects of revenge on his uncle and others, and the tiger-ferocity with which he sprang to vengeance when he saw his time come, almost destroy all sympathy for his own unhappy fate.

In the sixteenth year of this prince was passed the important statute of *Præmunire*. By this, all persons bringing into the kingdom papal bulls for translations of bishops and other purposes were to forfeit their goods and chattels and be imprisoned for life. This act received a very large interpretation from the judges and proved of great service in checking the papal usurpations.

A spirit of innovation or reform in religion was at work at this time in England; and John Wickliffe, the precursor of, or pioneer to, those who overthrew the dominion of the Papacy, flourished in the reigns of Edward and Richard. We will give a brief account of this extraordinary man and his labours and opinions.

Wickliffe was born in 1324. He graduated at Oxford, where from his great knowledge of Scripture he acquired the title of the Gospel Doctor; he was also perfectly skilled in the scholastic philosophy then in vogue. He first appeared as an author in 1356, when he put forth a tract in which he found the moral cause of the great plague with which Europe had just been afflicted in the vices and corruption of the church. Four years later he engaged in a controversy with those pests of society (as they have always proved) the Mendicant orders. The insolence, the rapacity, the shameless falsehood of these men had passed all bounds. They swarmed over the whole country 'as thick as motès in the sonnè beme'; they everywhere disparaged the secular clergy and the monks, whose revenues they frequently diverted to themselves. As the universities suffered much from their artifices, that of Oxford testified its gratitude for the exertions of Wickliffe by presenting him with a living of some value, and he shortly after was made warden of Baliol-college. He was then made head of Canterbury-hall by primate Islep, its founder, but he was deprived by Langham, Islep's successor. Wickliffe appealed to the pope, who decided, as might be expected, against him; and the king on receiving a present of two hundred marks from the monks of Canterbury, in whose favour the decision had been made, confirmed it. Wickliffe appeared as the champion of the crown and parliament in the dispute with the pope about the tribute yielded by John, and triumphantly refuted the arguments of the papal advocates. In 1372 he obtained a doctor's degree and the professorship of divinity, and in 1374 he was one of the commissioners sent to Bruges to treat with

the papal ministers on the subject of provisions. On his return he was presented by the crown with a prebendal stall in the diocese of Worcester, and with the rectory of Lutterworth in Leicestershire.

Wickliffe had returned from Bruges convinced, as he says himself, that the pope was "the most cursed of clippers and purse-kervers," and he went on fearlessly in his exposures of the papal corruptions. The heads of the church thought they could no longer safely remain silent, and he was therefore summoned to appear before the convocation at St. Paul's. On the appointed day (Feb. 19, 1377,) he came accompanied by his patron the duke of Lancaster, and by lord Henry Percy the earl-marshal. An altercation took place between these noblemen and Courteney bishop of London, in which the advantage of temper and decorum was clearly on the side of the prelate; and the citizens, who disliked the duke, espousing the cause of their bishop, made an uproar which caused the assembly to be broken up. Next day the mob went to the duke's palace, the Savoy, and reversed his arms, and they murdered a priest whom they took for the earl-marshal.

The pope now fulminated four bulls against Wickliffe, and the next year (1378) he had to appear at Lambeth before the papal delegates. But the Londoners assembled in great numbers, and even broke into the chapel where they were sitting, menacing them with destruction if anything befell the reformer; and a message came from the young king's mother, the 'Fair Maid of Kent', desiring them not to proceed in the business. Wickliffe delivered a paper explanatory of his sentiments, in which he so enveloped them in the scholastic jargon, that his judges affected to be satisfied of his orthodoxy and dismissed him. He returned to his rectory; the great schism in the papacy succeeded, and the court of Rome had no leisure to attend to him. He therefore went on exposing its errors, and at length had the hardihood to assail its palladium, the *astound-*

ing doctrine of the real corporal presence. The duke of Lancaster, in dismay at his temerity, now abandoned him. He was summoned before the convocation at Oxford (1382), where he maintained his opinions. A mandate was obtained from the king banishing him from that university, and he retired to Lutterworth, where he died of paralysis on the last day of the year 1384. Thirty years after, by a decree of the council of Constance, his remains were taken up and burnt, and cast into the adjacent stream named the Swift.

The whole system of the church of Rome is so diametrically opposed to Scripture, that it need not surprise us to find Wickliffe arriving at the truth on most points when once he had the courage to search the Scriptures for himself. His discoveries, like those of all independent inquirers, were of course gradual; hence we must expect to find in his writings, as in those of such as by patient inquiry have endeavoured to extricate themselves out of the labyrinth of error, imperfect views and even contradictions, bold assertions and unguarded expressions poured out in the first fervour of discovery, but softened and restricted on cooler consideration. This renders it difficult to state with any certainty what his real opinions on every point were, and the difficulty is increased by the circumstance of only a portion of his works having been printed*.

The two pillars of Popery are the doctrines of Merits and Transubstantiation: in opposition to the former, Wickliffe held the doctrine of justification by faith only, though perhaps not in such strong terms as some subsequent reformers have done; on the latter point he seems to have agreed with the present Church of England in denying a bodily, but acknowledging a real spiritual presence in the sacramental elements. To most of the other erro-

* The Germans have printed all the works and letters of *their* great reformer. It is not to our credit that those of *our* reformer should still remain in manuscript.

neous doctrines then inculcated, rather than shock prejudices by denying them, he tried to give a rational sense ; but against pardons, indulgences and excommunications, those great implements of clerical extortion and encouragement to sin, his invectives were trumpet-toned. Viewing with the Albigenses, with Dante, Petrarca and all the opponents of the church of Rome, the pope as Anti-Christ, he unsparingly applied that and similar terms to him and his supporters ; and as his was an age of coarseness and plain speaking, his language frequently passes the limits set to controversy by the decorum of the present day*.

In opposition to the church of Rome, Wickliffe was strenuous in upholding the authority of the state over all orders of men. Tithes he regarded as *alms* bestowed on the church, and he held that the state was justified in withholding them if the clergy neglected their duty ; perhaps he went even further, and thought that in such case the individual layman might refuse tithe and dues. His own retention of a valuable living till his death is, we should suppose, a sufficient proof that he did not think that the clergy should derive their only support from voluntary offerings. Still his language on this point was ambiguous and very liable to perversion. It was equally so on another, the right of wicked men to their temporal possessions, and Wickliffe has been charged with holding the doctrine of dominion being founded in grace. Yet here again the inference is belied by his life and conduct, and his language if rightly understood is perfectly innocent and far less strong than that of even St. Augustine on the same subject. It is however not impossible that, as is asserted, these principles of Wickliffe, misunderstood, may have

* The delicacy of Dr. Lingard is shocked at Wickliffe's coarseness. Does it exceed the following, of the orthodox Walsingham ? "That old hypocrite, that angel of Satan, that emissary of Anti-Christ, the not-to-be-named John Wickliffe, or rather *Wickebeleve*, the heretic," &c. & .

been used at the time of the rising of the peasantry to justify the excesses they were urged to commit.

Following the maxim that we may learn from the enemy, Wickliffe sent his Poor Priests, as he styled them, as itinerant preachers through the kingdom, imitating in this his foes the friars. His doctrines were thus widely spread, and they were embraced by numbers of both sexes. His followers, who were remarked for the purity and even austerity of their morals, were named Lollards*.

But Wickliffe gave Rome a deeper wound than any she had yet received by translating the Bible into English, and thus enabling even the unlearned to see how repugnant to the Word of God were her doctrines and practices. This is the weapon which as the sword of the Spirit Rome has always dreaded, and which alone suffices to overthrow her power.

* From the Low Dutch *lollen* or *lallen*, 'to sing', it is said.

CHAPTER IX.

HENRY IV. (OF BOLINGBROKE.)*

1399—1413.

Murder of Richard II.—Battle of Homildon.—Battle of Shrewsbury.—Suppression of the insurrection.—Seizure of the prince of Scotland.—Anecdotes of the prince of Wales.—King's death and character.—The clergy.

THAT Henry of Lancaster was the choice of the nation is an undeniable fact. The true heir of the throne was the earl of March ; but he was a child only seven years old, and not a voice was raised in his favour. So little fears had Henry from his claims that he contented himself with holding him and his brother in an honourable confinement at Windsor.

When parliament met the titles of prince of Wales, duke of Cornwall, Guienne, etc. were conferred on Henry's eldest son—an indirect way of acknowledging the justice of the king's title. The acts of the twenty-first year of Richard were repealed, and those of his eleventh year were affirmed. The lords appellant against the duke of Gloucester and his friends were deprived of the titles and estates bestowed on them on that account. Future appeals of treason were prohibited, as also were delegations of the powers of Parliament to a committee. It was also forbidden under heavy penalties for any one but the king to give liveries. Toward the close of the session, the primate having previously enjoined all the lords to strict secrecy, the earl of Northumberland delivered a message from the king requiring them to say what should be done with the deposed monarch, whose life the king was resolved to preserve. They replied

* Authorities : Walsingham, Otterburne, Monstrelet.

that he should be placed in sure ward in a place where there should be no concourse of people, under trusty officers, and that none of his friends should be admitted to him. The king then came to the house (Oct. 27,) and passed this sentence on his unhappy predecessor, whose fate it was evident was now sealed.

How long that fate might have been delayed had no conspiracy been formed in his favour, it is hard to say. But five of the lords appellant had agreed among themselves to invite the king to a tournament at Oxford, and there to seize him and to proclaim Richard. Rutland, however, who was one of them, proved a traitor. It is said indeed that his father the duke of York insisting on seeing a letter he had received, he went, finding concealment impossible, and revealed the whole to the king. The conspirators, who had altered their plan, seized (Jan. 4, 1400,) the castle of Windsor; but Henry, warned by Rutland, had left it and gone to London, where he proclaimed them as traitors and commenced a levy of troops. They retired to the west proclaiming Richard as they went. At Cirencester, where they lay the first night, the people rose under their mayor and attacked the quarters of the earls of Kent and Salisbury, whom they forced to surrender, and beheaded them the next night; the same fate befell the lords Lumley and Despenser at Bristol; and the earl of Huntingdon falling into the hands of the late duke of Gloucester's tenants at Pleshy, was put to death by them. The death of the deposed monarch soon followed; the lords had risen in the first week of January, and before the end of the month his death at Pontefract was announced. He had refused food it was said when he heard of the deaths of his brothers Kent and Huntingdon. To this however few gave credit; the general opinion was that he had been starved to death by order of Henry, and that he had lingered for fifteen days. Another account says that sir Piers of Exton came from London with seven assistants to murder him.

Richard when they entered his room, aware of their design, sprang forward and snatched a battle-axe from one, with which he killed some of them ; but Exton brought him to the ground by a blow on the back of the head, and then with a second blow despatched him. The body was brought to London and exposed at St. Paul's with the lower part of the face uncovered, which proved that Richard was dead but nothing more. Henry attended the obsequies in person at St. Paul's, and the corpse was then interred at Langley*.

To set his own spirit and activity in opposition to the inertness of his predecessor, Henry summoned the military tenants to his standard, and marching to the Tyne sent to claim the homage of the king of Scotland. On meeting with a refusal he advanced to Edinburgh, but he did not waste and destroy the country. The Scots would give no opportunity of fighting, and want of supplies forced him to retire. A border-war was kept up, the principal event of which was the battle of Homildon or Humbledown (1402). The earl of Douglas having passed the borders at the head of ten thousand men to ravage the northern counties, the earl of Northumberland and his son Henry Percy named Hotspur, assembled their troops to intercept him on his return. When they met (Sept. 14), the Scots occupied the hill of Homildon, the English an opposite eminence. The English archers descended into the valley and won the victory, while the men-at-arms stood looking on. Douglas himself and many nobles and knights were made prisoners.

The very next year (1403), strange as it may seem, Northumberland took up arms against the man whom he had aided to seize the crown. Whatever the real cause may have been the occasion was as follows. There was a gentleman in Wales named Owen Glendour, or of Glendourdy, descended from its ancient princes. He had received a legal education in England, and had been in the

* See Lingard, iv. 283.


service of the earl of Arundel and the late king. Lord Grey de Ruthyn, a relative of Henry's, seized some of Glendour's land which lay contiguous to his own; the Welshman applied to parliament, but getting no redress he took advantage of the king's absence in Scotland to right himself by the strong hand. Owen was declared an outlaw; in return he assumed the sovereignty of Wales. His countrymen who were studying or labouring in England, provided arms and flocked to him, and the belief that he was versed in magic arts augmented his influence. The king thrice led an army in person into Wales, and thrice he had to retire baffled by the weather, the country and the skill of Glendour. Lord Grey and sir Edmund Mortimer were each defeated and made captives (1402). The king, his son and the earl of Arundel invaded Wales in three different points; but the heavens seemed to fight for the champions of independence, as tremendous rains forced the invaders to retire, and Henry actually ascribed his ill-success to the magic of Glendour. He then gave permission to the relatives of lord Grey to ransom him, but he refused those of Mortimer when they applied for the same favour.

This, we are told, irritated Hotspur, who was married to Mortimer's sister; his father and his uncle the earl of Worcester shared in his discontent, and on their applying for advice to Scrope archbishop of York, the prelate urged them to proclaim the rightful heir and levy war on Henry as a usurper. A secret confederacy was formed with Douglas, to whom they gave his liberty, and with Owen Glendour, who is said to have given his daughter in marriage to Mortimer. Northumberland having fallen sick, Hotspur joined by Douglas led his forces toward Wales, and when his uncle came up with his troops in Cheshire, they put forth a manifesto accusing the king of wasting the public treasure, and allowing his favourites to exclude the great lords from access to him. Henry, who was on his way to the north, replied that the greater part of the late supplies

had been paid to the Percies themselves, and offered them a safe-conduct to come and expose their griefs. At Burton-on-Trent he learned the route of the rebels, and turning westwards he entered Shrewsbury just as they came in sight of it. Hotspur halted at Hartlefield, whence he sent a defiance to the king, calling him false and perjured for having violated all the engagements made on his return to England and having usurped the crown. Henry, unable to refute the charges, replied that he had no time for writing and that the sword should decide.

Next morning (July 21) the two armies, each about fourteen thousand men, were drawn out. The king sent the abbot of Shrewsbury with proposals of peace, but by the influence of Worcester they were rejected. The adverse cries of "St. George !" and "Esperance Percy !" then rose ; the archers on both sides poured their fatal hail of arrows ; Hotspur and Douglas, each with thirty followers, plunged into the centre of the English seeking the king ; the earl of Stafford, sir Walter Blount and two others, all of whom wore the royal arms to deceive the enemy, were slain ; the prince of Wales was wounded in the face. Hotspur and Douglas now attempted to force their way back, but a chance arrow pierced the brain of the former and the latter was made a prisoner. After a conflict of three hours the insurgents fled. More than a third of the royal army was slain or wounded, but the loss of the rebels was much greater. Worcester, lord Kinderton and sir Richard Vernon, who were among the prisoners, were executed as traitors ; Douglas was treated with all courtesy. Northumberland, who was on his way to join his son when he heard of his defeat and death, disbanded his forces and shut himself up in his castle of Warkworth. He came however and surrendered himself to the king at York (Aug. 11), and received a pardon for all offences in the next parliament.

Though Henry was thus triumphant over his enemies, his throne was by no means secure : Glendour was still in



arms; a false Richard had been set up*; the favourers of the rights of Mortimer were numerous; the young earl of March had even been stolen out of Windsor castle, but he was speedily retaken. Soon too (1405) another insurrection broke out in Yorkshire, headed by Scrope the archbishop, Northumberland, and Mowbray, earl-marshal, son of the late duke of Norfolk. A writing was fixed on the doors of the churches charging the king with perjury, rebellion, the murder of his sovereign and various other crimes; and eight thousand men, led by the archbishop and the earl-marshal, assembled at Shipton-on-the-Moor near York. Prince John (Henry's third son) and the earl of Westmoreland came against them. A conference took place between the leaders (May 29); the prelate and earl were induced (whether by guile or not is uncertain) to disband their forces, and they were then made prisoners and conveyed to Henry at Pontefract. The king directed Gascoigne, the chief justice, to pass sentence on them, and when he scrupled to do so he gave the charge to a knight named Fulthorpe, who made no hesitation, and the prelate and the earl were both beheaded. Northumberland fled into Scotland, and the king reduced all his castles. Some time after (1408) the earl made an irruption into the north, but he was defeated and slain near Tadcaster (Feb. 28) by sir Thomas Rokeby, the sheriff of the county. Wales was gradually reduced, but Owen Glendour still held out in the retired fastnesses. He was living in the following reign, and seems never to have lost his liberty or his independence.

An accident, fortunate for him, but of which he did not make the most generous use, gave Henry a control over the councils of Scotland. The duke of Albany, brother of Robert III., had seized on the power of the state; his eldest nephew, heir to the crown, had perished in the prison in which he had been confined, and Robert to save his younger

* See Appendix (U).

son James, a child but nine years old, was sending him to France (1405). The ship on board of which the prince was, being captured by an English cruiser, Henry, though there was a truce between the two countries at the time, refused to liberate the royal captive. Robert dying shortly after, Albany assumed the government, and Henry then was able, by the threat of setting the rightful heir at liberty, to keep the regent in a state of subserviency. He however made some amends to the prince for his loss of liberty by having him carefully educated.

The public events of the remainder of this king's reign, if we except a slight interference in the quarrels of the French princes, were of no importance. The wildness and levities of the prince of Wales are said to have caused his father some uneasiness. This prince, who had shown undoubted valour in the field, in time of peace plunged into riot and excess; but still gleams of right feeling broke through his follies which evinced that his heart was not corrupt. It is said that when one of his riotous companions had been taken up and brought before the chief justice Gascoigne, the prince went and demanded his release, and when refused drew his sword on the judge. Gascoigne forthwith ordered him to prison for the offence, and the prince meekly submitted. "Happy the monarch," said the king when he heard it, "who has a judge so resolute in the discharge of his duty and a son so willing to submit to the laws." A suspicion was also instilled into the mind of the king that his son aspired to the throne. When the prince heard of this he demanded an audience of his father, threw himself on his knees before him, and handing him a dagger besought him to deprive him of life since he had deprived him of his favour.

Though the king was but in his forty-sixth year the symptoms of approaching death were manifest. Violent eruptions had broken out in his face, he was subject to constant fits of epilepsy, and remorse, it is added, secretly preyed on his conscience. We are told that one day as

he lay in a fit apparently dead the prince came in, and taking the crown, which according to custom lay by him on a cushion, carried it into an adjoining room. The king on recovering sternly asked what had become of his crown; the prince instantly brought it back. "Alas! fair son," said the king at the close of their conversation, "what right have you to the crown when you know your father had none?" "My liege," said the prince, "with the sword you won it, and with the sword I will keep it." "Well," replied the king, "do as you think best, I leave the issue to God, and hope he will have mercy on my soul*." As he was praying (March 20, 1413,) in St. Edward's chapel in Westminster abbey he was seized with his last fit, and he expired in the abbot's chamber.

Henry IV. was possessed of many estimable qualities, and had he obtained the crown in a regular way would have made an excellent sovereign. Injustice, as we have seen, drove him to crime; one act led to another, till they ended in the murder of his unhappy kinsman and predecessor.

By his first wife Mary Bohun, coheiress of the earl of Hereford, Henry had four sons, Henry his successor, Thomas duke of Clarence, John duke of Bedford, and Humphrey duke of Gloucester, and two daughters, who were married to the duke of Bavaria and the king of Denmark. He had no issue by his second wife Jane of Navarre.

Those who had given Henry his crown resolved to derive advantage from the nature of his title. The commons strengthened most of their rights and privileges in this reign and acquired new ones. Such, for instance, was freedom from arrest, a privilege at that time necessary for the cause of liberty, but which at the present day only serves to enable poor or dishonest members to baffle their creditors, and thus brings into or keeps in parliament men who should not be there. They also established their right not merely to vote but to appropriate the supplies.

* Monstrelet, i. 163. Lingard thinks this was an invention of the rival family.

The clergy obtained in the second year of this king the writ *De comburendo hæretico*, and thus partially introduced into the kingdom the Inquisition with its horrible *autos-da-fé*. Instead of inquiring into such opinions of the Lollards as were really injurious to society, they made the scholastic absurdity of transubstantiation the test. Primate Arundel immediately began to act on this statute, and the first victim to the metaphysical Moloch was William Sautre, parish priest of St. Osithes; a tailor named Badby was also burnt in the presence of prince Henry, who vainly urged him to recant and save himself.

Yet though parliament authorised the church to check freedom of thought by the fire and fagot, they seemed well enough inclined to deprive it of its income. In the sixth year of Henry the commons urged him to seize the temporalities of the church for the public service. They said that the clergy possessed a third of the lands of the kingdom, that they bore no part of the public burdens, and that their wealth disqualified them for the proper discharge of their religious duties. The primate answered that the clergy sent their vassals and tenants to the wars, and themselves offered up prayers night and day for the prosperity of the state. The speaker replied with a smile, that he thought their prayers but a slender supply. It was the evident policy of Henry to court the clergy, and the commons therefore were baffled. In the eleventh year of the king, however, they made a new attempt. They proposed to Henry to seize the whole of the church property, as fifteen thousand priests with stipends of seven marks a year would discharge the spiritual duties better than they were done at present. Henry rejected the proposal with great indignation*.

* Walsingham, 371, 379. They said that the revenues of the church would suffice for the support of 15 earls, 1500 knights, 6000 esquires, and 100 hospitals, besides leaving £20,000 a year to the king.

CHAPTER X.

HENRY V.*

1413—1422.

Sir John Oldcastle.—Henry claims the crown of France.—Conspiracy.—Invasion of France.—Battle of Agincourt.—State of France.—Conference of Meulant.—The Perpetual Peace.—Death of Henry.

THE joy of the nation at the accession of Henry V. was extreme. It was indeed slightly shaded by the recollections of his youthful follies, but all apprehensions were dispelled by the conduct of the young monarch. He dismissed his former companions with suitable presents, assuring them of further favour when they should show that they were reformed. He continued his father's honest servants and ministers in their offices. He set the earl of March at liberty; he restored the Percy family to their estates and honours; and he removed the remains of Richard II. (by whom he had once been favoured †) from Langley and deposited them in Westminster abbey, himself attending as chief mourner.

One cloud alone overcast this propitious dawn. The sect of the Lollards was represented to the king as holding opinions alike subversive of church and state, and he was induced to allow the zealous primate Arundel to put the laws in force against them. Sir John Oldcastle (baron of Cobham in right of his wife), a man of distinguished military talents and high in the favour of the late king, was regarded as the head of the sect, and the primate deeming

* Authorities: Walsingham, Elmham, Titus Livius, Monstrelet.

† He attended Richard on his last unfortunate expedition to Ireland, at which time he received knighthood from his hand. Richard, though expressing himself satisfied of young Henry's innocence of his father's designs, left him, when departing from Ireland, a prisoner in the castle of Trim.

him the fittest person to commence with applied to the king for permission to indict him. Henry advised moderation and undertook himself to reason with the accused, but the zealous soldier was not to be moved by the royal arguments. The primate was then allowed to proceed; he was aided by his suffragans of London, Winchester and St. Davids. The knight was brought before them, and after a noble defence of his opinions, in which he clearly confuted his adversaries, and at the same time so explained his sentiments as to leave abundant room for conciliation if his judges desired it, he was declared guilty of heresy and was delivered over to the tender mercies of the secular arm*. He however made his escape from the Tower, in which he was confined. He and his followers are now said to have formed the atrocious design of surprising the king at Eltham, where he kept his Christmas, putting him, his brothers and the principal clergy and nobility to death, and forming the realm into a federal republic with Oldcastle for its president. This scheme, it is added, was frustrated by the sudden return of the king to Westminster, and the insurgents then were directed to assemble at an appointed time in St. Giles's fields; but the night before the king occupied the ground with some troops, having previously closed the city-gates to keep in the Lollards of the city. The first parties that arrived were made prisoners, and the rest, who were coming when they heard this ill news, dispersed and fled (1414).

This account, which is given by the bitter enemies of the Lollards, has a most improbable air, yet we know not what violent projects men driven to desperation may have formed. At all events the prisons in and about London were filled, and thirty-nine persons, among whom was sir Roger Acton, a man of good property, were suspended by chains

* Read his trial in Foxe, or in Southey's Book of the Church, i. 359-379. "His conduct," says Lingard, "was as arrogant and insulting as that of his judge was mild and dignified."

from a gallows in Ficket Field, and then burnt alive as heretics and traitors. A reward of 1000 marks was offered for lord Cobham dead or alive, but he escaped into Wales, where during four years he eluded his persecutors. At length he was discovered by lord Powis. He defended himself valiantly, and would probably not have been taken alive if a woman had not broken his legs with a blow of a stool. He was carried to London in a horse-litter, where he was hung by a chain and burnt alive as a heretic*.

It is said that the late king had when dying charged his son, if he wished for domestic quiet, never to let the nation remain long at rest ; it is also said that the primate, fearing an attack on the property of the church, to which parliament was urging the king, to divert his thoughts and those of the nation to other objects, advised him to assert his claim to the crown of France. Whether these counsels were given or not the present distracted state of France offered a fair field for ambition. The king, Charles VI., after some years of the fairest promise became subject to fits of mental derangement. The conduct of affairs was disputed between his brother the duke of Orleans and his cousin the duke of Burgundy. The latter having caused the former to be assassinated, the kingdom was filled with bloodshed and ruin by the two contending parties ; for the princes of the blood all sided with the young duke of Orleans, whose party was named the Armagnacs, from his father-in-law the count of that name. The late king of England had fomented the quarrel by giving alternate aid to each party ; the ardent spirit of the present young monarch urged him to renew his claim to the crown. This demand being at once rejected, Henry offered to be content with the full sovereignty of Normandy, Maine and

* "Judgement," says Lingard, "was instantly pronounced that he should be hanged as a traitor and burnt as a heretic. St. Giles's fields, which had been the theatre of his rebellion, witnessed also his punishment." This is not a fair statement, as the reader is led to think that he was first hanged, and then his body burnt, instead of being roasted to death as he was.

Anjou, and the places named in the Peace of Bretigni and one half of Provence*; he required that the arrears of king John's ransom should be paid, and the princess Catherine be given in marriage to him with a portion of two millions of gold crowns. These terms were too extravagant to be entertained, but he was offered the whole of the ancient duchy of Aquitaine and the princess with a dower of 600,000 crowns. Henry recalled his ambassadors and began to prepare for war, his parliament cheerfully granting him two tenths and two fifteenths. He however sent again (1415), giving up his claim to Normandy, Maine and Anjou, offering to take the princess with one million of crowns, but insisting on all the other terms. The French court offered to raise the princess's portion to 800,000 crowns, but would yield on no other point. Henry forthwith prepared for war; by pawning his jewels and by loans he raised a sum of 500,000 nobles, while his barons and knights were busily engaged in levying troops.

When the army had assembled at Southampton the king proceeded thither. Visions of glory floated before his imagination as he viewed the embarkation of his gallant troops; but these visions were overcast with gloom, by information of a conspiracy among those of his own family and household to rob him of life and fame. The objects of the conspirators, the earl of Cambridge, brother to the duke of York, sir Thomas Grey and lord Scroop of Masham, are obscure; their plan is said to have been to conduct the earl of March to the frontiers of Wales, and there proclaim him king in case that Richard II. were really dead. They were condemned and executed as traitors; the innocence of the earl of March would seem to be proved by the circumstance of his sitting as one of their judges. Yet such was the insecurity of life and honour in those days that he

* Henry III. and his brother had married two of the four co-heiresses of Berenger count of Provence.

deemed it prudent soon after to obtain from the king a pardon for all treasons and offences*.

King Henry soon embarked, and a speedy voyage carried his fleet of fifteen hundred sail to the mouth of the Seine, where (Aug. 14) he landed a gallant army of six thousand men-at-arms and twenty-four thousand archers, and immediately invested the town of Harfleur by sea and land. After a valiant resistance for nearly five weeks the town capitulated (Sept 22); the inhabitants were expelled, being only permitted to take a part of their clothes and fivepence each; the remainder of the property was divided among the victorious army. But this army was soon sadly thinned by dysentery, and when the sick and wounded had been sent home to England and a garrison had been placed in Harfleur, the king found his troops reduced to one half their original number, and no longer adequate to any enterprise of moment. Still his chivalrous spirit would not suffer him to re-embark without giving some further proof of his knightly daring, and in spite of the remonstrances of his council he resolved (Oct. 8) to lead his diminished forces to Calais. The army marched in three divisions (the usual English mode); supplies were hardly procured from the villages on the way; the enemy hung on them and cut off the stragglers. At length they approached Blanchetaque, where Edward III. had crossed the Somme, but the ford was now secured with lines of palisades with troops stationed behind them. The king retired and moved up the river; but all the bridges were broken and all the fords secured, and the enemy moved as he moved along the opposite bank. At length, finding a ford near Bethencourt unguarded, the English crossed and established themselves on the right bank. D'Albret, constable of France, who commanded the French army, fell

* Hallam (iii. 288) says "he had certainly connived for a while at the conspiracy."

back toward Calais, sending orders to all the troops that were on their march to join him without delay. Meantime in a council of war held at Rouen, at which king Charles was present, it was resolved to give battle; orders to that effect were transmitted to the constable, who communicated them by heralds to king Henry, inquiring which way he intended to march. The king replied, by that which led straight to Calais, and dismissed the heralds with a present of one hundred crowns.

The English leisurely pursued their march toward Blangi. On reaching an eminence the duke of York descried the enemy making for Azincourt*. The king gave orders to form in line of battle; but as the enemy did not approach, the English, after standing in their ranks till evening, advanced to a village named Maisoncelles, where they obtained good provisions and remained for the night. The French, who now amounted to at least fifty thousand horsemen, took a position in the fields before the village of Azincourt, through which the English, who D'Albret was resolved should be the assailants, must pass. Though the night was dark and rainy they assembled round their banners revelling and discussing the events of the coming day, even fixing the ransoms of the English king and his barons; for of victory they had not a doubt. The English passed the night far differently; they made their wills and employed themselves in devotional exercises; sickness, famine and the thoughts of the paucity of their numbers tended to deject them, but the recollection of former victories and the gallant spirit of their king raised their spirits. The king took little rest; he visited all the quarters; made his dispositions for battle next day; bands of music, by his orders, played all through the night: before sunrise he summoned all the army to hear mass and then led them to the field (Oct. 25).

The English were drawn up in three divisions and two


* Called by our writers Agincourt.

wings, the archers as usual in advance of the men-at-arms. Each archer had a long stake, sharp at both ends, to stick in the ground before him as a defence against the charge of the French cavalry. The king mounted on a grey palfrey, having his helmet of polished steel wreathed with a crown of sparkling stones, rode from rank to rank cheering his men. Hearing one officer say to another that he wished a miracle would transfer thither some of the good knights who were sitting idle at home, he declared aloud that he would not have a single man more; as if God gave them the victory it would be plainly due to his goodness, if he did not, the fewer that fell the less the loss to their country; but of the result he had no apprehension. The French army was similarly arrayed, but its files were thirty, while those of the English were but four deep. The distance between the armies was not more than a quarter of a mile.

As the French did not advance the king directed refreshments to be distributed through the ranks, and he secretly sent off two detachments, the one to lie in ambush in a meadow on the enemy's left flank, the other to set fire to the houses in his rear during the action. Three French knights then came summoning them to surrender. The king ordered them off, and forthwith cried, "Banners, advance!" Sir Thomas Erpingham cast his warder into the air; the men fell on their knees, bit the ground, then rose and with a shout ran toward the foe. When they had gone twenty paces they halted and shouted again; those in ambush repeated the shout; the archers fixed their stakes obliquely in the ground, and running beyond them discharged their arrows; a body of eight hundred horse appointed to oppose them was slaughtered and dispersed, and in the confusion the archers slung their bows behind their backs, and grasping their swords and battle-axes rushed on, killed the constable and his principal officers, and routed the whole of the first division. The archers

formed again by the king's directions, who now came up with the men-at-arms and attacked the second division, led by the duke of Alençon. Here the resistance was obstinate. The duke of Clarence being wounded and on the ground the king stood over and defended him till he was removed to a place of safety. Eighteen French knights, bound by a vow to take or slay the king, now rushed on him, and a blow from the mace of one brought him on his knees, but his guards rescued him and slew all the assailants. The duke of Alençon reached the royal standard, killed the duke of York and cleft the crown on the king's head, but he speedily fell, and his division turned and fled. Henry now prepared to attack the third division; just then word came that a large force was falling on the rear; in the hurry of the moment the king gave orders to put the prisoners to death; and numbers had actually perished when it was discovered that the alarm was caused by a body of six hundred peasants who had entered Maisoncelles and were plundering the baggage. The slaughter was then stopped. Meantime the houses in the rear of the French had been set on fire; the third division began to waver, and only six hundred men could be induced to follow their leaders, the counts Falconberg and Marle, in a charge on the English, where they found captivity or death.

The victory was now complete. "To whom," said the king to Montjoy, the French king-at-arms, "to whom doth the victory belong?" "To you, sir," was the reply. "And what castle is that I see at a distance?" "It is called the castle of Azincourt." "Then," said the king, "be this battle known to posterity by the name of the battle of Azincourt." A fatal battle it was to France! among the slain were the dukes of Brabant, Bar and Alençon, and the constable and admiral of France, seven counts and more than one hundred bannerets and eight thousand knights and esquires, and among the prisoners were the



dukes of Orleans and Bourbon, and the counts of Eu, Vendome and Richemont. The loss of the English was but sixteen hundred men, with the duke of York and earl of Suffolk. As they crossed the field of battle next morning on their way to Calais they killed such of the wounded as were still alive, and when they were gone thousands of men and women flocked from the surrounding villages and stripped the dead, leaving them totally naked.

After a short stay at Calais Henry returned to England leading his noble captives with him. He was received with enthusiasm in London, where, after the manner of the age, the streets were hung with rich tapestry, curious pageants were exhibited, and the public conduits were made to run sweet wines. The parliament too was most liberal in its grants to the triumphant monarch.


The next year (1416) the count of Armagnac, who now governed France, as the dauphin was dead, made a vigorous attempt to recover Harfleur, which he besieged by sea and land. But the duke of Bedford, the king's brother, soon appeared with a numerous fleet, defeated that of the French, and relieved the town. Soon after king Henry and the emperor Sigismund (who had visited England, where he formed an alliance with the king,) passed over to Calais and had an interview with the duke of Burgundy, under the pretext of seeking a remedy for the schism which now existed in the church, but in reality to arrange the plan of war against France, where matters were now in the utmost confusion. Armagnac had induced the imbecile monarch to order the seizure of the treasures of the queen Isabella of Bavaria, whom he also accused of adultery and caused to be confined at Tours. Isabella, a woman of a fierce vindictive spirit, instantly proposed a league to the duke of Burgundy, whose bitterest enemy she had hitherto been. Her offer was accepted; the duke at the head of sixty thousand men marched toward Paris, taking all the towns in his way. As the Armagnacs held

that city he passed on to Etampes and Chartres, and the queen, as was concerted, having prevailed on her guards to accompany her to a church in the suburbs of Tours, the duke, who was lying with eight hundred men in an adjacent forest, appeared and carried her to Troyes, where she assumed the title of regent, making him her lieutenant.

Meanwhile king Henry had landed in Normandy (Aug. 1) with an army of sixteen thousand men-at-arms and an equal number of archers. Fortress after fortress and town after town submitted; Caen was taken by storm, Bayeux by composition; the campaign closed with the reduction of Falaise. In the spring (1418), having received a reinforcement of fifteen thousand men, he divided his forces and speedily reduced the whole of Lower Normandy. He then proceeded (July 30) to invest Rouen, the capital of the province*, which though possessing a brave garrison was after an obstinate defence of nearly six months obliged to open its gates.

While the king of England was thus recovering what he regarded as the patrimony of his ancestors, the two parties into which the French were divided thought only of opposing each other. One night (May 23) one of the gates of Paris was secretly opened to a party of the Burgundians; they were joined by thousands of the citizens; the count of Armagnac, several ladies and bishops and lords and members of the parliament were thrown into prison; and on the night of the 12th of June a mob of sixty thousand persons assembled, broke open the prisons, and massacred all in them without distinction of sex or rank, and then slaughtered all through the city those who were hostile to the Burgundian faction. The present dauphin, the third son of the king, was taken out of bed by a knight named Tannegui du Chastel, wrapt in a sheet

* The population of Rouen is said to have been 200,000 souls. At the present day it is not half the number.



and conveyed away. The queen and duke entered Paris next day in triumph, where they now exercised the royal authority without opposition. The adverse party retired to Poitiers and proclaimed the young dauphin regent. Both parties made proposals to Henry, who, as was his interest to do, only sought to play them off against each other. At length the fall of Rouen (Jan. 13, 1419,) awakening them to a sense of their danger, they renewed their negotiations, the dauphin even soliciting a personal interview. But he did not keep his appointment when made: the duke then proposed an interview between the two kings. It was arranged that Charles should come to Pontoise, Henry to Mantes. In a plain near Meulant between these towns, a plot of ground, washed on one side by the Seine and inclosed by palisades on the other three, was marked out for the conference. At a mast which was raised in the centre stood two rich pavilions for the royal parties, and tents were pitched on the right of the inclosure for the attendants of Henry, on the left for those of Charles.

On the appointed day (May 30) the king of France, having an attack of his disorder, could not appear; but in the morning the queen, the princess, and the duke of Burgundy came escorted by one thousand horse, and Henry and his brothers of Clarence and Gloucester arrived followed by one thousand men-at-arms: they met in the centre; the king bowed to the queen and princess, whom he had never seen before; Catherine, who was graceful and beautiful, employed, as instructed by her mother, all her charms on the heart of the king; and when in spite of his efforts the queen saw that they had taken effect the princess was removed and appeared no more. Henry's demands were Normandy and the provinces ceded by the peace of Bretigni in full sovereignty; the French ministers made no objection; the conferences were extended on one pretext or another for an entire

month: at length Henry discovered that the whole was a feint, and that Burgundy had been meantime negotiating with the dauphin through a lady of the name of De Giac. The two princes met soon after (July 11) at Melun, and vowed to forget past injuries and unite their forces against the English. Henry for the present could only avenge himself by the surprise and capture of Pontoise.

It would appear that Henry's hopes of the conquest of France were now at an end, yet ere many months were past he had gained all he could desire. The duke and dauphin, who still distrusted each other, agreed to a conference at Montereau on the Yonne. They were to meet on the bridge over that river, across which barriers were placed with gates in them. Each entered the intermediate space with ten attendants (Sept. 10); the duke bent his knee to the dauphin, and was addressing him, when he was struck in the face with a small axe by Tannegui du Chastel, and he was despatched by several wounds: one of his followers escaped, another was slain, the rest were made prisoners. The dauphin constantly denied his previous knowledge of this foul deed, but those who perpetrated it still retained his favour. It however ruined his cause; all France was filled with horror and indignation; and the heir of the murdered prince, thinking only of revenge, hastened to conclude a treaty with Henry, the queen engaging that Charles should ratify whatever was arranged. Henry's terms were the hand of the princess Catherine, the regency during the king's lifetime, and the crown on his death. These terms were at once acceded to. Henry marched at the head of sixteen thousand men-at-arms to Troyes, where the court then was; the 'Perpetual Peace,' as it was styled, was sworn to (May 21, 1420); the princess and he were affianced, and after a short interval married (June 2); and Henry then, accompanied by his bride, set out to conduct the siege of Sens.

In the winter the two kings returned to Paris, where




the states-general met and gave their approbation to the treaty. Henry then (1421) conducted his lovely bride to England, and she was there crowned with a magnificence hitherto unknown. While the king remained in England his brother of Clarence, whom he had left in command in Normandy, made an irruption into Anjou, which adhered to the dauphin. The marshal La Fayette assembled what troops he could, among which were seven thousand Scots under the earl of Buchan, the regent's son. Clarence, advancing with only his men-at-arms, fell in with them (Mar. 22) at a place named Beaujé, and being greatly outnumbered his force was utterly routed, twelve hundred being slain and three hundred made prisoners. The duke himself was wounded by sir William Swynton, and then slain by Buchan, whom the dauphin for this victory made constable of France. On the news of this disaster Henry returned without delay to France (June 20), with four thousand men-at-arms and twenty-four thousand archers, and accompanied by the young king of Scotland, whose presence he hoped would operate on the allegiance of the Scots in the French service. He drove the dauphin from Chartres and forced him to take refuge in Bourges; then returning to Paris he, to gratify the Parisians, laid siege to Meaux, which he reduced after a siege of five months; and now (1422) all France north of the Loire except Anjou and Maine obeyed him.

To crown his happiness his queen, who had been delivered of a son, came over with her babe to join him. The two courts met in Paris to keep their Whitsuntide, which was celebrated with the utmost magnificence. But this was the last of the glories of king Henry; a fatal disease was secretly preying on him. On his march to raise the siege of Cosne he felt himself so unwell (July 30), that he was obliged to resign the command to the duke of Bedford and return to Vincennes. He was soon aware that recovery was hopeless. The infancy of his son gave him

uneasiness, and on the day of his death (Aug. 31) he strongly recommended his queen and her child to his brother of Bedford and his other nobles. He advised them to cultivate the friendship of the duke of Burgundy, and to offer him the regency of France, and never to release the princes taken at Azincourt; he charged them in the worst of cases not to make peace unless Normandy was ceded to the crown of England. In a few hours after he breathed his last, with the utmost piety and resignation. He was only in the thirty-fourth year of his age and the tenth of his reign.

This great prince was justly a favourite with his people. He was handsome in person and affable in manners. His valour was undoubted, and it was united with skill and prudence. In the pursuit of his unfounded claim to the crown of France, he is as much to be admired in the capacity of the statesman as in that of the warrior.

The queen-dowager Catherine afterwards married sir Owen Tudor, a gentleman of Wales. They had two sons, Edmund created earl of Richmond, and Jasper earl of Pembroke. As we proceed we shall behold their descendants seated on the throne of England.



CHAPTER XI.

HENRY VI.*

1422—1461.

Affairs of France and England.—Battle of Verneuil.—Siege of Orleans.—Battle of the Herrings.—Joan of Arc;—her cruel death.—Losses of the English.—The king's marriage.—Death of the duke of Gloucester;—of cardinal Beaufort.—Accusation of Suffolk;—his death.—Jack Cade.—The duke of York.—Battle of St. Alban's.—War of the Roses.—Battle of Bloreheath.—York declared heir to the crown.—Battle of Wakefield;—of Mortimer's Cross.

A MINORITY for the fourth time appears in the royal line of England, the new monarch being an infant only nine months old. The English parliament, regardless of the wishes of the late king, refused the duke of Gloucester the title and authority of regent; a council of regency with the duke of Bedford, and during his absence the duke of Gloucester, at its head under the title of Protector was appointed, and the parliament was then dissolved.


The duke of Burgundy having declined the regency of France, it was conferred on the duke of Bedford by king Charles. This imbecile monarch followed his gallant son-in-law to the grave within two months, and his death seriously affected the English interest, by withdrawing from it the semblance of royal authority which it had hitherto possessed. The dauphin forthwith assumed the regal title as Charles VII., and was crowned and anointed at Chartres. Bedford, who equalled his late brother in ability and valour, and surpassed him in manners, sought by every means to attach the dukes of Burgundy and Brittany; and

* Authorities: Monstrelet, Wyrcestre, Whethamstede, Cont. of Croyland, Hardyng, Fenn's Paston Letters. The English chroniclers Fabyan, Hall, &c. now begin to be authorities.

at a conference held at Arras the three princes bound themselves to each other by oaths, cemented by the marriage of the dukes of Bedford and Brittany to the sisters of the duke of Burgundy. The war in France was continued. Bedford occupied himself (1423) in reducing such towns and castles in the north as still held out. An army of French and Scots formed the siege of Crevent on the Yonne; the earl of Salisbury joined the Burgundians and led his troops to its relief. The English forced the passage of the bridge (July 31), the Burgundians followed; the enemy were totally defeated, and their two commanders, the constable of Scotland and the count of Ventadour, were made prisoners. The capture of La Charité on the Loire opened a passage into the southern provinces.

As the Scottish government had lately sent Charles a reinforcement of five thousand men under earl Douglas, and it was feared that they might invade the north of England, the English ministry at this time offered king James his liberty on condition of his paying 40,000*l.* for the expenses of his nineteen years' captivity, and forbidding his subjects to enter the service of France. These terms were agreed to, and James, having espoused an English lady of high descent to whom he had long been betrothed, returned to his native kingdom, where he proved the ablest and best monarch that Scotland had ever possessed.

In the next campaign (1424) the duke of Bedford, with two thousand men-at-arms and seven thousand archers, laid siege to Yvri in Normandy, where the garrison had raised the standard of Charles. The constable of France with an army of eighteen thousand men came to its relief, but despairing of success he turned aside and surprised Verneuil. The duke of Bedford advanced to attack the enemy, who did not refuse the combat (Aug. 17). The English men-at-arms formed one compact mass, with the archers, protected by their stakes, on the flanks; a body of two thousand archers were set to guard the horses and the bag-



gage in the rear, and they fastened the horses together by the heads and the tails, and mixed them through the baggage so as to form an insuperable barrier. After the battle had lasted for an hour, without any advantage on either side, a body of French and Italian cavalry fell on the baggage; but unable to penetrate it they stood as marks for the arrows of the archers, who when they had slain or driven them off ran to the front and with a shout fell on the enemy. This decided the battle; the French fled, with a loss of three thousand men: sixteen hundred of the victors lay on the plain. The constable of France, his countrymen earl Douglas and his son, and other nobles were among the slain; the duke of Alençon and two hundred gentlemen were made prisoners.

The victory of Verneuil was productive of no consequences of importance; the blame has been laid on the ambition of the duke of Gloucester. Jacqueline heiress of Hainault, Holland, Zealand and Friesland, having been married to John dauphin of France, was on his death married to her cousin-german the duke of Brabant, a weak-minded youth only in his sixteenth year. Jacqueline, a woman of masculine spirit, soon learned to despise her feeble helpmate, and at length (1420) she left him and repaired to England, where the duke of Gloucester, smitten with the charms of herself and her heritage, sought her hand; after the death of Henry V. he openly espoused her, alleging that her marriage with her cousin was void, though the council of Constance had granted a dispensation. The duke of Burgundy, who was cousin to the duke of Brabant, was highly offended; the duke of Bedford was in the utmost perplexity; it was proposed to leave the matter to the pope, but Gloucester refused, and at the head of five thousand men he took possession of Hainault (1425). The duke of Burgundy sent aid to his cousin; a challenge passed between him and Gloucester, but the duel did not take place. Gloucester returned to England, leaving Jacqueline

at Mons; she was obliged to surrender and was conducted to Ghent, whence she made her escape in man's attire and fled to Holland, where she maintained the war for two years, but at length (1428) was obliged to submit to the duke of Burgundy. Gloucester meantime seems to have given up all thoughts of her, for he married Eleanor daughter of lord Cobham, who had long lived with him as his mistress.

Gloucester also caused his brother much uneasiness by his quarrels with their uncle, Henry Beaufort the bishop of Winchester. This ambitious prelate was second son of John of Gaunt by Catherine Swynford, and he held the high office of chancellor. Bedford was obliged to come over to England in 1426 to effect an apparent reconciliation between them. The following year the prelate received a cardinal's hat from Rome.

For three years, owing to want of means on both sides, the war had languished in France. Meantime the duke of Brittany had yielded to the instances of his brother the count of Richemont, whom Charles had made constable of France, and began to separate himself from his English alliance. Bedford immediately poured his troops into Brittany, defeated the Bretons everywhere, and soon forced the duke to renew his engagements. On his return to Paris (1428) several councils were held, and it was resolved, contrary it is said to the opinion of the regent, to carry the war beyond the Loire. The campaign was to be opened by the siege of Orleans, a strong well-garrisoned city on the right bank of that river. The English army of ten thousand men under the earl of Salisbury, one of their ablest generals, crossed the Loire, and carried by assault (Oct. 23) the Tournelles, or castle which defended the bridge on the left bank; but the garrison had broken down one of the arches, and a few days after as Salisbury was looking out from one of the windows of the Tournelles he was struck in the face by a shot from the ramparts, and he died of his

wound. The command then devolved on the earl of Suffolk; reinforcements arrived; bastilles, or huts defended by intrenchments, were constructed round the city, but the spaces between them were so great, on account of the extent of the walls, that the enemy, who had large magazines at Blois, found little difficulty in conveying in supplies.

In the beginning of the Lent (1429) sir John Falstaff set out from Paris with fifteen hundred men, and four hundred wagons laden with salt herrings and other provisions for the besiegers. At the village of Roveray (Feb. 12) he learned that the earl of Clermont was advancing with from four to five thousand horse to intercept him. He halted and formed round his men a circle of the wagons, leaving but two openings, each guarded by a strong body of archers. The commander of the Scots in the French army advised that the men-at-arms should dismount; Clermont refused, and it was finally agreed that each might do as they pleased. Before day the attack was made; the English arrows flew with their usual effect, and ere long the enemy fled leaving six hundred men slain. After this 'Battle of the Herrings,' as it was named, Falstaff reached the camp in safety. Lines were now run from bastille to bastille, and the town was completely shut in. The besieged offered to surrender the town into the hands of the duke of Burgundy, but the regent insisted on its being given up to the English, who had won it with their blood.

The fate of Orleans now seemed decided; a general gloom overspread the French court, and Charles even meditated flight into Spain or Scotland; but his mistress the fair Agnes Sorel, it is said, recalled him to more manly thoughts, and at length one of the most extraordinary appearances in history came to raise the fallen fortunes of France.

In the small hamlet of Domremy in Champagne dwelt a peasant named Jacques d'Arc, among whose children was a daughter whose name was Joan. The character of this

maiden was stainless ; she was remarkable for her piety and serious cast of thought. The misfortunes of her king and country made a strong impression on her imagination, and incessant solitary brooding soon produced visions ; she fancied that the saints Margaret and Catherine used to appear to her and urge her to undertake the defence of her country. She addressed herself to Baudricourt lord of the neighbouring town of Vancouleur, requiring to be sent to the dauphin, as she was appointed by Heaven to crown him. Baudricourt laughed at her pretensions, but afterwards, either believing in her mission or seeing the advantage that might be derived from it, he sent her with a small retinue to Chinon, where the court resided. Joan appeared clad in man's attire. After some delay she was admitted to the presence of the king, whom she assured that she was sent by Heaven to raise the siege of Orleans and conduct him to Rheims to be crowned. It is added that, though she had never before seen the king, she recognised him at once among his courtiers ; that she told him secrets known only to himself, and described and claimed a sword in the church of St. Catherine of Fierbois whose very existence had been forgotten. She was examined by a council of lawyers and divines at Poitiers, who pronounced her inspired. Mounted on a stately grey charger, which she managed with a dexterity acquired in her village, but which to those who knew not her origin appeared miraculous, and preceded by a banner, in which the Almighty, represented in the usual manner as a venerable old man, bore a globe in his hand, and was surrounded by fleurs-de-lis, the Maid was exhibited to the people, whose joy and enthusiasm knew no bounds. Care at the same time was taken that the most exaggerated accounts of the heaven-sent deliverer should reach the English camp, where, in despite of the efforts of Suffolk and his officers, a secret terror soon began to pervade the minds of the soldiers.

As want was now felt in Orleans, a large supply of pro-

visions was collected at Blois to be sent thither under a convoy of seven thousand men led by the able La Hire. Joan repaired thither ; she ordered the soldiers to confess themselves, and banished from the camp all the women of loose life. At the same time she wrote to Suffolk, ordering him in the divine name to raise the siege. La Hire embarked the provisions in boats ; his troops, headed by the Maid bearing her sacred banner, marched along the bank to protect them ; a sally from the town distracted the attention of the English, and the Maid and the stores entered Orleans unopposed. A few days after she headed a party of volunteers, and attacked and carried two of the bastilles. She then assailed the Tournelles, and after an assault of fourteen hours, during which she was wounded in the neck, that fortress was carried. The hopes of the English now completely expired, and at dawn the next day (May 8) they set fire to their line of forts and departed from before Orleans.

The earl of Suffolk was now besieged for ten days in Jargeau, whither he had retired. The Maid headed the attack and scaled the wall ; a stone struck her on the head, and she fell down into the ditch. "On, on ! my countrymen," cried she as she lay ; "fear nought, the Lord hath delivered them into our hands." An unguarded place was discovered ; the French rushed in : part of the garrison were slain, the rest made prisoners. "Are you a knight ?" said Suffolk to the officer who demanded his sword : he replied in the negative. "Then," said the earl, "I make you one," and he gave him the blow of knighthood with his sword, which he then surrendered. Melun and other fortresses opened their gates ; lord Talbot led the dispirited remains of the English army toward Paris, but at Patay he was overtaken by the French. Falstaff advised a retreat ; Talbot disdained to show his back to an enemy. The English, however, made but a feeble stand ; twelve hundred men were slain, and Talbot and lord Scales were

made prisoners. Falstaff, who had fled in the beginning, was deprived of the order of the garter, but on his proving to the regent that it was little short of madness to fight at Patay his honours were restored.

The heroic Maid of Orleans, as she was now named, had performed the first part of her mission; she now urged the king to set out for Rheims, that the whole might be fulfilled; and, though all the intermediate country was in the hands of the English and Burgundians, Charles and his ministers resolved to hearken to her. Attended by ten thousand horse, the king set forth; at Auxerre the people, though they feared to open their gates, supplied him with provisions. Troyes and Chalons readily received him; the people of Rheims expelled their Burgundian garrison. The holy oil, brought, as the legend told, by a dove from heaven to the coronation of Clovis, the founder of the monarchy, sanctified him (July 17) in the eyes of his people; and then the Maid, who held her banner at his side, fell on her knees, and declaring her mission ended craved with tears to be dismissed. But unhappily for her her further presence was deemed of too much importance; she was induced to remain, and a patent of nobility for herself and her family, with a pension equal to the income of a count, was conferred on her.

The duke of Bedford was now in a condition of great difficulty; he could obtain neither men nor money from home, and disaffection was spreading all round him. Yet his abilities rose superior to his difficulties; he kept the duke of Burgundy steady, and having prevailed on the cardinal of Winchester to lend him five thousand men whom he was leading on a crusade against the Hussites of Bohemia, he advanced to engage king Charles. The armies came in view near Senlis; but the French, though greatly superior in number, thought on Azincourt and Verneuil and feared to engage. Bedford withdrew to Normandy, and Charles then advanced to Paris. An attack was made

on the fauxbourg of St. Honoré (Sept. 12) ; the Maid was wounded, and lay unnoticed in the ditch till the evening, when she was found by a party sent in quest of her. Charles then returned to Bourges for the winter.

The following spring (1430) the duke of Burgundy laid siege to Compeigne. A force led by the Maid advanced to its relief. On her way she routed a Burgundian corps; she surprised the post of Marigni (May 25), but reinforcements arriving she was forced to retire. In the retreat she repeatedly faced about on her pursuers; but at length an archer seized and dragged her off her horse. She surrendered to the bastard of Vendôme, by whom she was conducted to John of Luxembourg, who commanded the army. The greatest rejoicings were made for her capture, the solemn *Te Deum* was sung at Paris, and Bedford purchased her at a large price from her captors.

The bishop of Beauvais, a creature of the English, forthwith claimed a right to try her for sorcery and imposture, as she was taken in his diocese; the university of Paris also demanded her trial. She was removed to Rouen, where a commission of prelates, among whom the cardinal of Winchester alone was English, aided by the inquisitor-general assembled to try her. She was produced before them in her male attire and laden with chains (Feb. 12, 1431), from which she prayed to be relieved. But as she had already attempted to escape, and declared she would do so again, her request was refused. She was brought sixteen times before the court; she answered all the questions put to her calmly and firmly; she maintained the reality of her visions and the truth of her mission; she was condemned as a heretic, and sentenced to be delivered over to the secular arm. The natural love of life then operated in her bosom, and she was induced to recant; she owned that her visions were illusions of the devil, and swore never again to wear man's attire. Her sentence then was commuted to perpetual imprisonment. But in her dungeon her visions returned,

or, as it is said, her enemies left men's clothes in her cell, and being tempted at the sight to put them on, she was caught in them ; and, as now guilty of a relapse, she was delivered over to the secular arm (May 30) in that form of mockery and insult which had been devised by the church for such occasions. She was led to the market-place, where the pile was formed. When the fire was kindled she uttered loud exclamations, and as the flames enveloped her she was seen embracing a crucifix, and calling on Christ for mercy.

Thus perished, in the twentieth year of her age, the heroic, the admirable Maid of Orleans, to whom, as our philosophic historian remarks, "the more generous superstition of the ancients would have erected altars." She perished the victim of national enmity and of a sanguinary superstition. In excuse for her judges and enemies can only be alleged the general belief in sorcery, in which they may have shared* : for the heartless neglect of her by the French king and his nobles, after she had served their purpose, no excuse can be offered. It is but one instance among many of the selfishness and want of generosity which, we fear, form a part of the French national character. Posterity however has done justice to the noble Maid, and by none are her virtues more freely acknowledged or more warmly eulogised, and her hard fate more sincerely deplored, than by the descendants of those whom she deprived of dominion in France, and who in their ignorance and bigotry were the authors of her death†.

The execution of the Maid produced none of the good effects expected from it ; of as little effect was the coronation of the young king at Paris (Dec. 17) ; the petty warfare to which the want of means confined both parties was

* Bedford in one of his letters calls her "a disciple and lyme [limb] of the fiende that used false enchauntments and sorcerie."

† Compare the Joan of Arc of Southey with the Pucelle of Voltaire,



mostly to the disadvantage of the English. The death of the duchess of Bedford (1432) weakened the ties between the dukes of Burgundy and Bedford, and the precipitate union of the latter in the following year with Jacquette of Luxembourg, a vassal of the former, greatly widened the breach. Burgundy began to listen to proposals for an accommodation with his sovereign; but as he had sworn not to make peace without the consent of the English, a congress for a general pacification, under the mediation of the pope, was proposed to be held at Arras. This congress met (1435); but either from the high demands of the English, or because it was not wished to conciliate them, all their proposals were rejected; the cardinal of Winchester and the other English ministers withdrew, and peace was then made between the king of France and the duke of Burgundy. To add to the ill fortune of the English, the great duke of Bedford died at Rouen while the congress was sitting at Arras (Sept. 14).


Bedford was succeeded by the duke of York, but ere he arrived the Parisians had admitted the French troops into their city; and lord Willoughby, the governor, having retired into the Bastille was there forced to surrender. Lord Talbot sustained on various occasions the fame of the English arms, and when the duke of Burgundy was induced to declare against his former allies and laid siege to Calais (1436), the duke of Gloucester forced him to retire, and the following year the brave Talbot obliged him to raise the siege of Crotoi. A dreadful famine and pestilence then ravaged both countries during two successive years; in 1440 the constable of France took the city of Meaux, while Talbot and the earl of Somerset recovered Harfleur, which the French had taken eight years before. The next event of importance was the capture of Pontoise by Charles in person (1441). In the two succeeding years the war was prosecuted both in the north and south, but

nothing decisive occurred. Negotiations were then set on foot, and at length (1444) an armistice was concluded for two years.

Having briefly traced thus far the events of the war in France, we now return to the internal history of England.

As the young king advanced in years he developed a character the very opposite to that of his illustrious father. He was mild and pious, but of so slender a capacity and so feeble a temper that it was evident he would never be able to govern himself, much less to rule a great kingdom, and that he would be nothing more than a mere puppet in the hands of others. The court and parliament were divided into the factions of the cardinal and his nephew; the former ambitious, avaricious and intriguing; the latter generous, open and impetuous. The great wealth which the cardinal had amassed enabled him to gain the favour of the needy king by making him loans of money, and his influence visibly predominated over that of Gloucester. He was the advocate of peace with France, which Gloucester, filled with ideas of the glory acquired in the late reign, strenuously opposed. The question of the liberation of the duke of Orleans, one of the princes taken at Azincourt, tried the strength of the two parties (1439), but the arguments and the opposition of Gloucester proved unavailing; he then stated his reasons in a detailed protest on the rolls of chancery; and he entered his barge, to avoid being present when that prince was taking the oaths not to act against England.

About two years after (1441) the duchess of Gloucester was accused of treason and sorcery. The charge was, that with the aid of Roger Bolingbroke, one of the duke's chaplains, who was said to deal in the black art, and Margery Jourdain the witch of Eye, she had made a waxen image of the king, to whom the duke was next heir, which was exposed to a gentle heat; for according to the rules of magic, as it melted away the king's health and strength



would decay. She owned to having applied to the witch for love-potions to secure the affections of her husband, and to having directed Bolingbroke to calculate the duration of the king's life. The result was that Bolingbroke and Southwell, a canon of St. Paul's, were found guilty of treason; the latter died in prison, the former was executed; the witch was burnt by the church as a relapsed heretic; the duchess, after being made to walk three several times through the city without a hood and bearing a lighted taper, was consigned for life to the custody of sir John Stanley. It is probable enough that the charges made against the duchess were true. We have no direct proof that the cardinal had any concern in the business, but it is scarcely credible that any but the powerful faction of which he was the head would have ventured to offer so dire an insult to the first prince of the blood.

The marriage of the young king, who was now three-and-twenty, next came under consideration. It was proposed to match him with a daughter of the count of Armagnac, whose territories bordered on Guienne; but this project, which had the full approval of Gloucester, was counteracted by Pole earl of Suffolk, and Charles hearing of it made the count and his family prisoners. The cardinal and his party then cast their eyes on Margaret, daughter of René titular king of Jerusalem and Sicily, and duke of Anjou, Maine and Bar, a woman of great beauty and accomplishments and of masculine energy of mind. That she would absolutely rule the feeble king was not to be doubted; and as she was nearly related to Charles, who had always shown much regard for her, it was perhaps hoped that she would be the means of procuring an honourable peace. Suffolk was sent over to negotiate the match, and of his own authority he not merely consented that the princess should be taken without dower, (a thing of course to be expected as René was but a royal pauper,) but actually agreed that Anjou and Maine, which the English still held, should be

restored to him, that is in effect given up to the king of France. On Suffolk's return the majority of the council sanctioned what he had done; he was created a marquess, and sent back to espouse the princess as his royal master's proxy and conduct her to England. Henry met and married her at Titchfield, and she was crowned with great magnificence at Westminster (May 30, 1445).

The absolute power of Margaret over her husband was soon apparent. Suffolk naturally stood high in her favour, and, united with the cardinal and his nephew the duke of Somerset, they overbore all opposition and ruled the kingdom. We are in ignorance of the details of affairs for nearly two years, but on the 10th of February 1447 a parliament met by summons at Bury St. Edmund's, to which the knights of the shire were directed to repair in arms; guards were placed round the king's residence, and the men of Suffolk were arrayed. Gloucester came from his castle at Devizes; on the second day (11th) he was arrested on a charge of high treason; on the eighteenth (28th) he was found dead in his bed. His death was ascribed to apoplexy or chagrin by those who maintained that it was natural*; others however asserted that he had been murdered. His body, like those of Edward II., Richard II., and Thomas of Gloucester, was exposed to public view, but these we know had all been murdered. Certain it is that at the present day and in free countries state-prisoners do not die thus suddenly and opportunely. It is remarkable that a great part of his estates went to Suffolk and his relatives and friends, and that even before his death his county of Pembroke had been granted to that nobleman in case of his dying without issue. If he was murdered Suffolk beyond doubt was guilty; his death, as the chronicler says, may have been "not unprocured" by the cardinal, and not unapproved by the young queen. The

* This was the belief of Whethamstede abböt of St. Alban's, who was very partial to the duke.



unhappy duchess was refused her dower. Five gentlemen of the duke's household were sentenced to death as sharers in his treasons. They were hung up, but immediately cut down and marked for quartering; when Suffolk, who was present, announced the king's pardon and their lives were preserved.

The duke of Gloucester was generally lamented, and the memory of the 'Good Duke Humphrey,' as he was called, was long cherished. This prince had been honourably distinguished by his patronage of letters: his death, as we shall see, proved the ruin of the house of Lancaster, by opening a field to the ambition of a rival family.

The cardinal, whether guilty or innocent, followed his nephew to the grave within six weeks, lamenting, we are told, that money could not purchase life, and that he should be thus cut off when, Gloucester being removed, he had hopes of the papal crown. It seems no doubt strange that such a notion should be entertained by a man eighty years old and with a mortal disease on him, but both public and private life yield abundant instances of similar fatuity. It is curious that, somewhat like the emperor Charles V., he caused his obsequies to be celebrated in his presence a short time before he died. The character of this prelate is thus drawn by the chronicler Hall: "More noble of blood than notable in learning, haut of stomach and high in countenance, rich above measure of all men and to few liberal, disdainful to his kin and dreadful to his lovers, preferring money before friendship, many things beginning and nothing performing."

The surrender of Maine and Anjou, the keys of Normandy, was speedily followed by the loss of that great province: town after town and castle after castle opened their gates or were taken by assault. The French troops were then led into Guienne; no resistance was offered, and at length (1451) Calais alone remained of all the English conquests and possessions in France.

The popular indignation in England was high and was chiefly directed against the favourite Suffolk (now a duke). Moleyns the bishop of Chichester, who had had the inglorious task of delivering up Maine to the French, was slain in a popular commotion at Portsmouth (1450); and it was said that before his death he declared that Suffolk was a traitor who had sold Maine to the French, and boasted of having as much influence in their council as in the English. Suffolk resolved to anticipate the stroke that he saw was aimed at him. When parliament met (Jan. 22) he rose, and addressing the king said, that his father* and his four brothers had lost their lives in the royal service in France; that he himself had served the king thirty-four years in arms; that he had been fifteen years of the king's council; that he had been born in England, where all his inheritance lay; and that therefore it was absurd to suppose he could be a traitor. He then required that any one who would make a charge against him should come forward and do so openly.

A few days after (28th), the commons having charged him with supplying his castle of Wallingford with provisions and stores for the purpose of aiding the king of France, he was committed to the Tower. Ten days later eight articles of impeachment were exhibited against him, of which the first and chief was that of having a design to set the crown, with the aid of the French king, on the head of his own son, whom he had married to the heiress of the late duke of Somerset, "presuming her to be the next inheritable to the crown." After a month's delay (Mar. 7) the commons, probably aware of the futility of these articles, sent up sixteen new ones, charging him with embezzling the public money, advising the king to make improvident grants, giving office to improper persons, procuring pardons for traitors, etc. In his defence

* See above, p. 342.

he treated the first article as ridiculous, since, as many peers then present well knew, he had intended to marry his son to a daughter of the earl of Warwick; as to the cession of Maine and Anjou he was no more guilty (if it was a crime) than the other lords of the council or of parliament. The other charges he said were frivolous and vexatious; of the second set of articles he took no notice.

As the commons seemed bent on his ruin the following expedient was adopted to save him. The king on his own authority, pronouncing him neither guilty nor innocent of treason, commanded him on the second impeachment to quit the kingdom for the space of five years. The parliament was then prorogued. The life of the duke was openly threatened, and two thousand people met in St. Giles's fields to intercept him; he however escaped down to his estates in Suffolk, and on the appointed day (Apr. 30) he sailed from Ipswich with two small vessels. He sent a boat into Calais to know if he might land there; but the boat was detained, and the Nicholas of the Tower, a large vessel of the state carrying a hundred and fifty men, came alongside his bark and ordered him on board. "Welcome, traitor, as men say," cried the captain as he came on deck. He remained two nights in the Nicholas, his confessor being with him. He was put to a mock trial before the sailors and condemned to death; and on the second morning a small boat with a block, a rusty sword and an executioner, came alongside. The duke was lowered into it; his head was severed from his body at the sixth blow. His body was placed on the sands at Dover, where it was watched by the sheriff of Kent till it was delivered to his widow by the king's order. No inquiry was instituted into this murder, as the parties who had planned and executed it were probably too powerful to be brought to justice.

The popular discontent caused by the feebleness and corruption of the government and the disasters in France,

and perhaps secretly excited by the partisans of the house of York, had already broken out in several places. But immediately after the murder of Suffolk a body of twenty thousand Kentishmen, led by a person of uncertain rank and origin* who was named John Cade, but assumed the name of Mortimer, appeared in arms at Blackheath (June 17). Two papers, named "The Complaints of the Commons of Kent" and "The Requests of the Captain of the Great Assembly in Kent," were forwarded to the king. These contained sundry complaints of oppressive government, and concluded by requiring that the relatives of Suffolk should be banished from the court, and the dukes of York and Exeter and some others who were named, be called to the king's councils; that those who had caused the deaths of the duke of Gloucester, cardinal Beaufort and the dukes of Exeter and Warwick, and occasioned the loss of the dominions in France, should be punished; that all extortions should be abolished, and the great extortioners be brought to justice.

The king having collected a force the insurgents retired; but when sir Humphrey Stafford came up with them at Sevenoaks (24th) with a part of the royal forces, they turned and defeated and slew him. Cade then arrayed himself in the fallen knight's armour and led his men back to Blackheath. The king, finding his men not inclined to fight, disbanded them and retired to Kenilworth, lord Scales with one thousand men undertaking the defence of the Tower. Cade then advanced to Southwark (July 1), and as the citizens had resolved to make no resistance he entered the city in triumph (3rd), giving strict orders to his men not to pillage, and in the evening he led them back to Southwark. Next day (4th) he returned, and having obliged the mayor and judges to sit at Guildhall arraigned before them lord Say, the royal chamber-

* He was said to have been an Irishman. In a letter written at this time he is called Mr. John Aylmere, physician. See Mackintosh, ii. p. 12. Ellis' Letters, i. 112. second series, contemporary document.

lain, who, having vainly pleaded his privilege as a peer, was beheaded at the Standard in Cheapside, and his son-in-law Cromer, the sheriff of Kent, shared his fate.


Some pillage having been committed on the third day (5th), the citizens grew apprehensive, and they agreed to join lord Scales in defending the bridge. A conflict ensued during the night; the bridge was taken and retaken several times, but finally remained in the hands of the citizens. A short truce ensued (6th), during which the two archbishops, who were in the Tower, sent the bishop of Winchester over the river with pardons for those who would return to their homes. The pardons were gladly accepted and the insurgents dispersed. But Cade soon repented, and collected more men; as their numbers however were not great they retired from Southwark, and quarrelling on the way their leader left them and fled towards Lewes, pursued by Iden, the sheriff of Kent, who slew him in a garden after an obstinate defence (9th). Iden received a reward of 1000 marks; several of the insurgents were afterwards executed as traitors; some of whom, it is said, confessed that it had been their intention to place the duke of York on the throne.

The duke of York was now in Ireland, the government of which country had been given to him when he was deprived of that of Normandy, which he had held for some years, in order to gratify the duke of Somerset, who coveted it. But the measures of this nobleman had been uniformly unfortunate; and his surrender of Caen, which belonged to the duke of York, had exasperated the mind of that prince against him. The queen's party resolved to oppose Somerset to the duke of York; the latter, aware of their machinations, suddenly left Ireland and proceeded to his castle at Ludlow on the marches of Wales; and having assembled his retainers set out for London, which he reached at the head of four thousand men, though a force under lord Lisle was sent to intercept him. He went to West-

minster, knelt before the king, complained of the state of the kingdom, and implored him to summon a parliament. The king promised to do so, and the duke then retired to his castle of Fotheringay (Sept. 30). Somerset returned to England the following month at the desire of the queen and her party.

When parliament met (Nov. 6) York and Somerset mutually accused each other; a bill at the same time passed the commons to attain the memory of the late duke of Suffolk, and to remove from court the duchess of Suffolk, the duke of Somerset, and some other lords. The king as instructed refused his assent, and the duchess and some others having demanded a trial were tried and acquitted. For some months altercations in parliament and acts of violence out of it succeeded. At length the duke of York repaired to his castle of Ludlow and raised the tenants of the house of Mortimer. He marched toward London (1452), demanding a reformation of the government and the removal of Somerset. Finding the gates of the city closed against him he turned into Kent; the king followed at the head of a superior force; the duke encamped at Dartford, the king at Blackheath. A parley ensued, Somerset was placed under arrest, and York dismissed his army and visited the king in his tent unarmed (Mar. 1). Here, as he renewed his charges against Somerset, that nobleman stepped out from behind a curtain and offered to maintain his innocence, and York as he retired was arrested and carried to London. Somerset advised an instant trial and execution; but the king was averse from blood, and the news of the approach of York's son, the earl of March, with an army intimidated the council. The duke was dismissed on renewing his oath of fealty, and he retired to his castle of Wigmore.

In the autumn of this year the Gascons, weary of their new masters and finding the demand for their wines in England on the decline, sent over a deputation offering to



return to their allegiance. The venerable Talbot, now earl of Shrewsbury, was sent with a force of four thousand men; his son lord Lisle followed with an equal number. The whole Bordelais with Chatillon in Perigord submitted before the winter. The next year (1453) the count of Penthievre invested Chatillon with twenty-five thousand men; Talbot hastened to its relief; the French retired to an entrenched camp, defended by three hundred pieces of cannon. Talbot ordered an assault (July 20); in the action his horse was killed under him and his leg was broken, and as he lay he was slain with a bayonet; his son lost his life in attempting to rescue him, and the army dispersed and fled. Bordeaux, defended by six thousand citizens and four thousand English, held out till famine compelled it to surrender. The English were permitted to depart with their property, the citizens were received to favour, and Guienne was lost for ever to England.

Though this loss was a real gain it was not so considered by the nation, and it augmented the odium under which the queen and her party lay. The birth of a prince however (Oct. 13) extinguished the hopes which the duke of York entertained of a peaceable succession, and, instead of lightening, only darkened the political hemisphere. It was openly said by the people that he was not the king's son; "his noble mother," says the chronicler, "sustained not a little disclauder of the common people." The duke however was too moderate to take any direct advantage of such rumours, and had his enemies been equally so the subsequent disasters might perhaps have been averted. Unfortunately for the queen's party the king soon after the birth of the prince fell into such a state of bodily as well as mental debility that he could no longer be made to enact the royal pageant with any propriety. This caused the return of the duke of York to the cabinet, and Somerset was speedily committed to the Tower. Early in the following year (1454), a committee of the peers having

ascertained the total incapacity of the king, York was appointed 'Protector of the church and kingdom' till the king should recover or the prince be of age.

The following Christmas however, the king having shown some glimpse of reason, advantage was taken of it to make him resume his authority ; and he forthwith deprived York of the protectorate, and released Somerset and restored him to favour (1455). York retired to his estates, and soon after being joined by the duke of Norfolk, and the earl of Salisbury and his son the earl of Warwick, he advanced toward London at the head of three thousand men. The royal phantom moved to meet them with a force of about two thousand men, and had only proceeded as far as St. Albans when the banners of the Yorkists were seen (May 22). The duke of Buckingham being sent to demand the cause of their appearance in arms, they replied by professions of the utmost loyalty, but required that Somerset and his associates should be given up to them as prisoners. Henry was made to return a stern reply, commanding them to disperse, and declaring his resolution to die rather than surrender any lord who was faithful to him. York forthwith assaulted the barriers, which were gallantly defended by lord Clifford. Warwick meantime forced his way through the gardens into the town, the barriers were soon burst, and the royalists turned and fled. This scuffle, which is dignified with the name of the battle of St. Albans, cost the king's party the lives of Somerset, Northumberland, Clifford, and about six score others*. Buckingham and his son were wounded, as also was the king himself in the neck ; he took refuge in the house of a tanner, where he was waited on by York with all humility and conducted to the abbey.

* We have here a glaring instance of how little the numbers given by late chroniclers are to be relied on. The number of the slain in the text is from the letter of one of the Pastons, who had been in the battle, while Hall gives it at 8000 and Stow at 5000.

Writs were immediately issued in the king's name for a parliament, and when it met (July 9) the royal idiot appeared seated on his throne, and pronounced York and his friends guiltless of the slaughter of St. Albans, as their letters explaining their views and motives had been kept back by the arts of the late duke of Somerset. The parliament was then prorogued. When it met again (Nov. 12), the duke of York at the instance of the commons was once more declared protector in nearly the same terms as before. But this protectorate was also of brief duration, for on the reassembling of parliament (Jan. 14, 1456) Henry was so well that the queen and her party had a sufficient pretext for asserting his sanity, and he went in person to the house (Feb. 25) and revoked the duke's commission. This prince made no opposition, and the royal puppet and his authority were henceforth wielded by the queen and her party.

During two years the ill-blood continued to ferment on both sides; the nation gradually divided into the two parties of Yorkists and Lancastrians, and a civil war was evidently on the eve of breaking out. Still the primate Bourchier and some other moderate men thought that the evil might be averted, and the king at their suggestion directed (1458) that the heads of both parties should meet in London to compose the feuds caused by the affray at St. Albans. They therefore repaired thither with their retainers; the Yorkists were quartered within, the Lancastrians without the city; the mayor, with five thousand armed citizens, was to keep the peace. York and his friends met every morning at the Blackfriars, the other party at the Whitefriars; the primate and other prelates went between them; and the proceedings were communicated to the king and the judges at Berkhamstead in the evening. An award was finally made, to which both agreed, and next day (Mar. 25) Henry went to St. Paul's with his whole court, the queen being led by the duke of York, the lords of each

party walking arm-in-arm to exhibit the reconciliation to the eyes of the people.

Small however is the force of reconciliations when ambition, revenge, and other strong passions are at work. Not long after (Nov. 9), as Warwick was attending the court one day, a quarrel arose between one of his and one of the king's servants; the latter being wounded his fellows armed themselves with swords, spits, and forks, and assailed Warwick on his way from the council to his barge, and he escaped with difficulty out of their hands. Thinking that his life was no longer safe, and strongly suspecting the queen, he retired to his castle of Warwick, and thence went to Calais, of which place he was governor. All confidence was now at an end; both parties prepared for arms; and a civil war, which was to fill England with blood and misery, was no longer to be averted.

As the duke of York now first advanced his claim to the crown, we will pause in our narrative to examine the state of the case between him and the king.

The king derived his title from Henry IV., who was undoubtedly raised to the throne by the choice of the nation. His house had now exercised dominion for sixty years, and had received repeated and voluntary oaths of allegiance from the whole nation, and from the successive heads of the house of York; it had therefore everything on its side but hereditary right: but if sixty years' undisturbed possession did not suffice to efface any claims to the contrary, what length of time would suffice? And how therefore could any descendant of Edward III. have a better or so good a claim as the king of Scots, for instance, who was the representative of the Saxon line? Nay, Wales as it has been said, might send forth descendants of British princes to assert a right of still more remote antiquity, of which force alone had deprived them. To reasoning of this kind the Yorkists had only to oppose the doctrine of inde-

feasible hereditary right*; but their chief reliance was on the amiable and popular character of their chief, and on the odium which the queen and her party had drawn on themselves by their arbitrary and oppressive government; for the innocent king was to the last an object of popular favour. The strength of the Yorkists lay in London and the adjoining counties, and in general among the middling and lower orders; the duke's main supporters among the nobility were his brother-in-law, Neville earl of Salisbury and his son the earl of Warwick, and Mowbray earl of Norfolk; but the far larger portion of the nobility were faithful to the king, and "the rose of Lancaster blushed upon the banners of the Staffords, the Percies, the Veres, the Hollands, the Courtneys,†" the Cliffords, the Talbots, and other illustrious names. As the red rose was the cognisance of the house of Lancaster and the white of that of York, the war is named that of the Roses.


To return to the narrative. A plan for a simultaneous rising was arranged between York, Salisbury and Warwick. The court, aware of the coming contest, distributed in profusion collars of white swans, the badge of the young prince, and invited the king's friends to meet him in arms at Leicester. The winter was spent in preparations on both sides; the ensuing spring and summer (1459) passed away in inactivity. At length Salisbury set out from his castle of Middleham in Yorkshire to join the duke of York at Ludlow. Lord Audley lay with ten thousand men at Bloreheath in Staffordshire to intercept him. Salisbury, whose force was small, feigned a flight; Audley pursued;

* York was descended on the father's side from the youngest son of Edward III., on the mother's side from Lionel, that monarch's third son.

† Hallam, *Middle Ages*, iii. 293. This author's judicious remarks on this point should be read, and also those of Mackintosh. See also a valuable note in Turner's *History of England* (vol. iii. 171, 8vo edit.), showing how almost every dynasty since the Conquest has reigned by parliamentary in opposition to hereditary right.

Salisbury crossed a rapid stream in a valley, and when one half of the pursuers were over it he turned and completely defeated them (Sept. 23). Audley and two thousand men were slain, lord Dudley and several others were taken. Salisbury met the duke at Ludlow, where they were soon joined by Warwick with a large body of veterans from Calais under sir John Blount and sir Andrew Trollop. The royal army of sixty thousand men meantime was advancing from Worcester. Offers of pardon if they submitted were sent to the Yorkists, who replied that they had only taken up arms in their own defence and were loyal to the king. Both sides prepared for action; but in the night (Oct. 13) Trollop went over to the king with his veterans, and his defection caused such distrust and dismay in the Yorkists that they separated without striking a blow. York retired to Ireland; his son the earl of March, Salisbury, and Warwick fled to Devon and thence to Calais.

A parliament was held shortly after at Coventry, and an act of attainder was passed against York, Salisbury, their wives and children, and Warwick, lord Clinton and some others. Their party however did not remit in its activity; and the following June (1460), when Warwick landed in Kent with a small force of fifteen hundred men, he was joined by the primate, by lord Cobham, and most of the gentry of the county. By the time he reached London he found himself at the head of twenty-five thousand men; the city gladly received him; he then set out to engage the royal forces which lay at Northampton. Lord Grey de Ruthyn having betrayed his post to the Yorkists they obtained (July 10) an easy victory; the duke of Buckingham, the earl of Shrewsbury, lord Beaumont, and about three hundred knights and gentlemen were slain on the royal side. Henry, who was found in his tent, was treated with every mark of respect by the victors; the queen and the prince escaped into Wales and thence sailed to Scotland.



Henry was conveyed to London, where he was made to issue writs for a new parliament. It had hardly met and reversed the acts of that of Coventry, when the duke of York, who had returned from Ireland, reached London at the head of five hundred horsemen, and going straight to Westminster and passing through the hall entered the upper house, and there stood with his hand on the throne. The primate asked him if he would not visit the king; he replied, "I know no one in this realm who ought not rather to visit me." He then went and occupied the royal apartments. Six days after (Oct. 16) the duke sent to the chancellor a statement of his claim to the crown, as representative of Lionel duke of Clarence, requesting a speedy answer. The chancellor asked if this paper should be read; the peers replied that it should, but not be answered without the king's command. Next day they went in a body to the king, who, having briefly and strongly stated the foundations of his rights, directed them to search for proofs against the claim of the duke. The lords then sent for the judges, but they declined to interfere, as by their office they were not to act as counsel between party and party. The king's serjeants and attorney also sought to excuse themselves; but their excuses were not admitted, and they were ordered to draw up an answer. In this were urged the oaths of fealty taken to the present family, and the various acts of parliament and entails of the crown. The duke's counsel replied that unlawful oaths are not binding, and that acts of parliament and entails are of no force against the rightful heir. The lords finally proposed a compromise, that the duke's claim should be acknowledged, but that Henry should retain the crown for his life, and at his death it should pass to the duke and his heirs. To this both agreed; the royal assent was given to a bill to this effect, and the king then wearing the crown went in state to St. Paul's, the duke attending as heir-apparent.

The high-spirited queen however would not thus tamely

surrender the rights of her son ; she was now in the north, where the earl of Northumberland and the lords Clifford, Dacres, and Neville had armed their followers in her cause ; and at York they were joined by the duke of Somerset and earl of Devon, with their tenants from the west. The duke of York set out with about five thousand men to oppose them, and a few days before Christmas he arrived at Sandal castle, near Wakefield. Here Salisbury and his other friends advised him to wait till the earl of March should arrive with succours ; but, whether urged by his chivalrous spirit or from some other cause, he accepted the challenge of the enemy and marched into Wakefield Green (Dec. 30), where he was instantly assailed on all sides. The rout of the Yorkists was speedy and complete ; upwards of two thousand men lay on the Green, the duke himself was taken prisoner, his captors led him to an ant-hill, and placing him on it as on a throne set a crown of twisted grass on his head, and bending the knee to him in derision, cried, "Hail, king without a kingdom ! Hail, prince without a people !" They then struck off his head, which Clifford presented on a pole to the queen, saying, "Madam, your war is done ; here is the ransom of your king." She burst into laughter, and, when she had glutted her eyes with the sight, sent it to be fixed on the walls of York. Salisbury and twelve other leaders who were captured were beheaded the next day at Pontefract. In the pursuit lord Clifford had overtaken on the bridge the earl of Rutland, a youth of about seventeen years of age*, whom his tutor, a venerable priest, was conveying to a place of safety ; struck by his appearance and attire he loudly demanded who he was ; the terrified lad fell on his knees to sue for mercy. "Save him," cried the tutor, "he is the son of a prince, and mayhap may do you good hereafter." "The son of York !" shouted the ruthless savage ; "as thy father slew mine so

* The earl of Rutland is usually said to have been only twelve years of age, but he was York's second son.



will I slay thee and all of thy kin," and plunged his dagger into the bosom of the helpless suppliant.

The earl of March was at Gloucester when he heard of the defeat and death of his father (1461). As he had with him a force of twenty-three thousand men, he was preparing to march against the queen, but the earls of Pembroke and Ormond hung on his rear with a body of Welsh and Irish. He therefore turned and gave them battle, and a total defeat (Feb. 1) at Mortimer's Cross near Hereford. Ormond and Pembroke escaped, but Owen Tudor, the father of the latter, was taken, and with some other leaders beheaded next day at Hereford, in retaliation for the executions at Wakefield. The queen meantime advanced toward London with her borderers, to whom their leaders had promised the pillage of the country south of the Trent. Warwick and the duke of Norfolk, taking the king with them, placed themselves at St. Alban's to oppose her. An engagement ensued (Feb. 17), which ended in the defeat of the Yorkists, who lost two thousand men. Henry was left in his tent with lord Bonville and sir Thomas Kyriel, to whom he had promised his protection*; but Margaret little heeded *his* promises, and they were beheaded the next day. Her troops pillaged the country round; but London and the adjacent counties remained steady to the cause of York. Edward advanced and united his forces with those of Warwick; soon the queen found it necessary to return with all speed to the north, and Edward entered London (Feb. 25) in triumph. A few days after (Mar. 3) the lord Falconbridge and the bishop of Exeter harangued the people assembled in St. John's Fields, Clerkenwell, on the bad title of Henry and the good one of Edward to the crown. Falconbridge then asked them if they would have Henry of Lancaster for their king; loud cries of "No, no!" arose: he then asked if they would love and obey Edward

* This is a disputed point.

earl of March as their sovereign lord; "Yea, yea!" cried they, "King Edward!" and shouted and clapped their hands. Next day (4th), in a great council it was resolved that Henry, by joining the queen's forces, had violated the award and therefore forfeited the crown, and Edward was forthwith proclaimed king.

Under the Lancastrian princes the importance of the house of commons was continually on the increase, and the influencing of the choice of members became a matter of great consequence in the eyes of the sovereign and the nobility*. Hitherto the elections seem to have been very irregular, all who chose to attend being privileged to vote.

In the eighth of the present king an act was passed limiting the elective franchise in the counties to freeholders of lands of the annual value of forty shillings. The statute thus commences: "Whereas the elections of knights of shires have now of late been made by very great, outrageous and excessive numbers of people dwelling within the same counties, of the which the most part was people of small substance and of no value, yet pretending to a right equal to the best knights and esquires, whereby manslaughter, riots, batteries and divisions among the gentlemen and other people of the same counties shall very likely rise and be," etc.

* See the Paston Letters, *passim*.



CHAPTER XII.

EDWARD IV.*

1461—1483.

Battle of Towton,—of Hedgeley-moor and Hexham.—Capture of Henry.—Marriage of Edward.—Risings of the peasantry.—Flight of Edward ;—his return.—Battle of Barnet,—of Tewkesbury.—Death of Henry,—of Clarence and of the king.

THE new monarch found it necessary to take the field again in a few days. The Lancastrians, to the number of sixty thousand men, having taken their station at York, Edward and Warwick left London to engage them ; and when they reached Pontefract their forces amounted to forty-nine thousand men. As it was of importance to secure the passage of the Aire at Ferrybridge, lord Fitzwalter was sent forward for that purpose ; he effected his object, but shortly after he was attacked and slain by lord Clifford, who in his turn was within a few hours slain by lord Falconbridge, and the passage recovered. The Yorkists then crossed the river, and next morning (Mar. 29), in the plain between the villages of Towton and Saxton, a general engagement commenced, under a heavy fall of snow, which drove in the faces of the Lancastrians. Both sides fought with obstinacy till toward evening, when the Lancastrians gave way† ; they retired in good order till they reached the river Cock, where they broke and fled in all directions. Edward had issued orders to give no quarter, and nearly

* Authorities :—same as before, and Commynes.

† According to the fragment published by Hearne, the action began at 4 o'clock in the evening of Saturday (March 29), was continued through the night, and was decided next day (Palm Sunday) at noon by the arrival of the duke of Norfolk with a reinforcement to Edward.

one half of the Lancastrians perished*. The earl of Northumberland and six barons were slain; the earls of Devon and Wiltshire were taken in the pursuit; the dukes of Somerset and Exeter reached York, whence they conveyed the king and queen to the borders.

The morning after this decisive victory Edward entered York. The heads of his father and friends were taken down from the gates by his orders, and replaced by those of Devon and Wiltshire. Thence he proceeded to Newcastle, and then returned to London, where he was crowned with great magnificence (June 29). On this occasion he created his younger brothers George and Richard dukes of Clarence and Gloucester. A parliament met immediately; the last three kings were declared usurpers; their grants, with a few exceptions, were revoked, but their judicial acts and the honours conferred by them were ratified. A bill of attainder was then passed against Henry, his wife and son, Somerset, Exeter, Northumberland, Devon, Wiltshire, and other nobles, knights, esquires and priests, to the number of one hundred and fifty. The avowed object was the annihilation of the Lancastrian party; it may also have been intended to provide rewards for the victors.

Meantime Margaret was making every effort to renew the contest. By the surrender of Berwick the aid of the Scots was obtained, and the queen then sailed (1462) to the continent to try to raise men and money. From the duke of Brittany she obtained a present of twelve thousand crowns, and Louis XI. of France lent her twenty thousand on the security of Calais, and gave Brezé the seneschal of Normandy permission to aid her with two thousand men. After an absence of five months she landed with her French auxiliaries in Northumberland. Both English and Scottish borderers repaired to her standard; the castles of Alnwick,

* The number of the slain on both sides was stated variously at from 30,000 to 37,000.

Bamborough and Dunstanburgh were taken, and fortune seemed to smile. But when Warwick appeared with twenty thousand men, and rumour told of the approach of Edward with a larger force, her troops lost courage and dispersed to garrison these three fortresses. The queen embarked with the French; a storm scattered her fleet; and she and Brezé, after witnessing the loss of her treasure in the tempest, escaped in a fishing-boat to Berwick. Edward advanced to Newcastle, and then returned to London, leaving Warwick to besiege the fortresses. After an obstinate resistance they were surrendered, on condition of the duke of Somerset, sir Richard Percy and some others being pardoned and restored to their estates and honours, and the garrisons being conducted to Scotland.


During this winter-campaign, as Margaret, her son and Brezé were riding through a forest, they were seized and robbed by a party of bandits. While the robbers were quarrelling about the booty, the queen contrived to steal away with the prince, and plunged into the depths of the wood. As she was wandering about she encountered a single robber: escape was hopeless; she boldly went up to him and said, "Friend, I commit to thy care the son of thy king." The outlaw was not without feelings of generosity; he accepted the charge, and conducted them in safety to their friends*. In the spring (1463) the queen, the duke of Exeter, Brezé and two hundred others sailed to Flanders. She thence proceeded to her father's duchy of Bar, where she remained watching the progress of events. Henry meantime was protected by a Welsh knight in his castle.

Still the spirit of the Lancastrians was unbroken, and the next year (1464) Henry was summoned from his retreat to put himself at the head of a body of exiles and Scots. Somerset and Percy, heedless of their oaths, resumed their

* Monstrelet, iii. 29.

arms ; and sir Ralph Grey, a Yorkist, thinking himself ill-used by Edward, seized the castle of Alnwick. But lord Montague, Warwick's brother, warden of the east marches, defeated and killed Percy at Hedgeley-moor (Apr. 25), and then at the head of four thousand men advanced against Somerset, who was encamped with a small force of not more it is said than five hundred men on the banks of the Dils-water near Hexham (May 15). The defeat of the Lancastrians was immediate ; Somerset was taken and beheaded the same day ; a similar fate befell the lords Roos and Hungerford and others. Grey was taken at Bamborough, and was executed as a traitor at Doncaster.

The unfortunate Henry, who had been at Hexham, had fled before the arrival of Montague. He was closely pursued ; three of his servants were taken in their gowns of blue velvet, one of them bearing his cap of estate, which was embroidered with two crowns and adorned with pearls. He however escaped into Lancashire, where he was concealed by his friends for more than a year. At length a treacherous monk gave information to sir James Harrington, who seized him as he was sitting at dinner at Waddington-hall (1465). He was forwarded to London. At Islington he was met by Warwick ; orders were given that no respect should be shown him ; his legs were tied under the belly of the horse on which he was placed ; he was led thrice round the pillory, and then consigned to the Tower, where however he was treated with humanity. The services of Montague were rewarded by the earldom of Northumberland. Fresh attainders were passed against the Lancastrians, whose estates went to reward the victors ; but these were followed by an act of amnesty : treaties of alliance were formed with most foreign princes ; and Edward, deeming himself secure on the throne, launched into pleasure, leaving the charge of affairs to the Nevilles, namely Warwick, Northumberland, and their brother George archbishop of York and chancellor.



The Nevilles were urgent with the king to marry some foreign princess, but it was not now in his power to comply. As he was one day hunting in Northamptonshire he called to visit Jacquette duchess-dowager of Bedford*, who had given her hand to sir Richard Woodville or Wydeville of Grafton in that county. While he was there the duchess's daughter Elizabeth, the widow of sir John Grey of Groby, who had fallen on the Lancastrian side in the second battle of St. Alban's, came and threw herself at his feet, imploring him to reverse her husband's attainder in favour of her innocent children. Edward was moved to pity; though the countenance of the fair suitor was not beautiful, her manners were graceful and winning, her form elegant, and her language and sentiments distinguished by wit and propriety. Her suit was listened to with favour. Love soon took the place of pity: the virtue, the prudence, or the ambition of Elizabeth was proof against temptation; the wishes of the monarch could only be gratified under the sanction of marriage, and to this he resolved to stoop. About the end of April (1464) he repaired to Stoney Stratford, and early in the morning of Mayday he stole over to Grafton, where a priest united him to the fair relict in the presence of his clerk, the duchess, and two of her female attendants. Edward stayed an hour or two and then returned to Stratford, and went to bed pretending to be fatigued with hunting. Two days after he invited himself and his train to Grafton, where he remained four days, never entering the chamber of his bride till the duchess had ascertained that all were retired to rest. He then set out for the north, but the days of Hedgeley-moor and Hexham had occurred before he arrived.

On his return Edward resolved to acknowledge his wife as queen. A general council of the peers having met on his summons at Reading abbey the following Michaelmas,

* See above, p. 358.

Elizabeth was led in by the duke of Clarence and the earl of Warwick, and was by all saluted as queen. In the May of the following year (1465) her uncle James of Luxembourg, having been invited over to give her dignity in the eyes of those who objected to the humbleness of her birth, the ceremony of her coronation was performed. Her influence over the king was soon apparent in the advancement of her family: her father was created earl Rivers* and made first treasurer, and then lord high constable; her five sisters were married to young noblemen of the highest rank; her brother Antony to the heiress of lord Scales, and her brother John, a youth of twenty, to the wealthy dowager duchess of Norfolk, now in her eightieth year! To the queen's own son Thomas was given the king's niece the heiress of Exeter, and he was created marquess of Dorset.

These promotions of the upstart Woodvilles naturally excited the jealousy of the Nevilles, who had expected to have a monopoly of power under the prince whom they had placed on the throne; and the king on his side, urged by the Woodvilles, became gradually estranged from them. The change was first manifested on the occasion of the marriage of the king's sister Margaret (1467). It was proposed to give her to the son and heir of the duke of Burgundy. Warwick, who was the avowed enemy of that prince, was for an alliance with one of the French princes. He was let to go over to Rouen to treat with Louis XI. for the purpose; but during his absence negotiations were carried on with the court of Burgundy, which ended in the marriage of Margaret into that house. Warwick on his return retired in discontent to his castle of Middleham; a reconciliation however was effected between the king and him, and when the princess was conducted by her brother to the coast she rode behind the earl of Warwick.

* He had been created baron Rivers in the late reign.

The next transaction of importance which we meet is the marriage of the duke of Clarence with the daughter of Warwick, in spite of the efforts of the king to prevent it (1469). The marriage took place at Calais (July 11), and it is singular that at this very time an insurrection of the peasantry broke out in Yorkshire, the county in which the influence of the Nevilles chiefly lay. By a law of king Athelstan the hospital of St. Leonard's near York had a right to a thrave of corn off each ploughland in the county. The peasantry complained of abuse of these funds, and at length refused payment; the officers distrained and imprisoned them; they flew to arms, and, to the number of fifteen thousand, under one Robert Hilyard, commonly called Robin of Redesdale, marched against York. They were there however attacked and routed by the earl of Northumberland, and their leader was taken and executed. But the insurrection now changed its character; the sons of the lords Fitz-Hugh and Latimer the nephew and cousin of Warwick, aided by the advice of sir John Conyers, an experienced officer, placed themselves at the head of it. The removal of the Woodvilles, the fancied authors of all the taxes and oppressions of which the people complained, was the ostensive object. The name of Warwick was freely used, and in a few days the insurgents amounted to sixty thousand men.

The king was in great perplexity; he wrote to Clarence and Warwick to hasten from Calais to him; lord Herbert advanced from Wales with eight thousand men, and lord Stafford joined him at Banbury with five thousand; but a dispute arising about their quarters at an inn, Stafford retired to some distance, and the rebels next day (July 26) fell at Edgecote on Herbert and killed him and five thousand of his men. In the pursuit the victors found lord Rivers and his son John in the forest of Dean and brought them to Northampton, where they were executed by a real or pretended order from Clarence and Warwick.

These two noblemen were now arrived ; they met the king at Olney, and they actually placed him in confinement at Middleham under the custody of the archbishop of York*. But a rising of the Lancastrians on the borders† obliged them to come to terms with him and set him at liberty. This was followed by a general pardon, and by the promise of the king's eldest daughter to George son of Northumberland, and presumptive heir to the three Nevilles, who was created duke of Bedford to raise him nearer in rank to the young princess. Yet it would seem that the reconciliation was anything but sincere ; for not long after (1470), when the king went to an entertainment given by the archbishop at his seat the Moor in Herts, as he was washing his hands before supper it was whispered to him that one hundred men were lying in ambush to seize and carry him off. Without any inquiry he stole to the door, mounted his horse and rode to Windsor. Under the mediation of the king's mother however a new reconciliation was effected.

Just at this time occurred a rising in Lincolnshire, headed by sir Robert Welles. The extortion of the royal purveyors was the ostensible, probably the real ground ; how far Warwick was concerned in it cannot be said with certainty, Edward however gave him and Clarence a commission to raise forces. Lord Welles the father of sir Robert fled to sanctuary when summoned to the royal presence ; he and sir Thomas Dymock his companion, however, came forth on the promise of a pardon ; but, as sir Robert did not lay down his arms, the king in violation of his word beheaded them both. He gave the insurgents

* The truth of this is proved by Lingard, in opposition to Carle, Hume and Henry.

† It was headed by sir Humphrey Neville. After the battle of Hexham this knight had remained for five years concealed in a cavern opening into the river Derwent.

a defeat at Erpingham in Rutlandshire* (Mar. 12), and their leaders Welles and sir Charles Delalaunde were taken and beheaded. Before their execution they declared that their object had been to aid the earl and duke in placing the latter on the throne; that they had acted under their instructions, but had given battle contrary to their advice, as if they had delayed a few days Warwick was to have joined them with twenty thousand men.

Clarence and Warwick on the defeat of the rebels moved toward Manchester, in hopes that the lord Stanley, who was married to Warwick's sister, would join them. On his refusal they turned southwards, and, being proclaimed traitors and pursued by the royal forces, they embarked at Dartmouth (Apr. 15) and made sail for Calais. But Vauclerc, a Gascon whom Warwick had left in command there, had resolved to play a double game; and while he turned the guns on them, and even refused to allow the duchess of Clarence who was ill to land, he sent secretly to assure Warwick of his own fidelity, but to inform him that the garrison could not be depended on; at the same time he sent protestations of his loyalty to the king. Warwick, feigning to be satisfied, sailed for Normandy, capturing what Flemish vessels he met; and landing at Harfleur, he and Clarence proceeded by invitation to the French court at Amboise, whither king Louis XI. also invited queen Margaret; and though she and Warwick hated one another mortally, and had most abundant reason so to do, the able monarch at length effected a reconciliation between them. Prince Edward married Warwick's second daughter Anne; it was agreed that all should unite to restore Henry to the throne, and if the prince should die without issue the crown was to go to Clarence. This prince however, who had hoped to wrest the sceptre from his brother, was

* This was popularly called the battle of Lose-coat Field, because the fugitives threw away their coats-of-mail to escape.

by no means pleased with this new arrangement; and he listened readily to the secret proposals made to him by king Edward through a lady of his duchess' train who had been left behind in England, and engaged to prove a loyal subject on due occasion.

Preparations were now made for the invasion of England, where Edward was passing his time in thoughtless gaiety. His more active brother-in-law of Burgundy sent a fleet to blockade the mouth of the Seine; but a storm dispersed it, and the exiles effected their landing at Plymouth (Sept. 13). Warwick proclaimed king Henry, and summoned in his name all men from sixteen to sixty to his standard. He marched in a direct line for Nottingham, (his forces increasing at every step,) as Edward had been drawn to the north by a pretended rising of Warwick's brother-in-law the lord Fitz-Hugh. Edward had summoned his friends to Doncaster; few came, and many of these soon went away again. One night, while he was in bed, intelligence came that Warwick was at hand; this was followed by tidings of six thousand of his troops having at the instigation of the marquess* flung away the white rose and, tossing their bonnets into the air, shouted "God bless king Harry!" No time was to be lost. He mounted his horse and rode to the town of Lynn, where finding three ships he embarked with about eight hundred followers, and making the mariners set sail for Holland (Oct. 3), landed near Alkmaar, whence he proceeded to the Hague.

Warwick and Clarence hastened to London; king Henry was taken from the Tower, and walked in procession with the crown on his head to St. Paul's (Oct. 13). A parliament was summoned, which among other acts confirmed the treaty of Amboise, and restored the Lancastrian lords who had lost their lands and honours. The Nevilles of course

* After the late rising Edward deprived Warwick's brother of the earldom of Northumberland (which he restored to the Percies), but he made him marquess Montague and continued his favour to him.


were reinstated in their former posts and offices, but their triumph to their credit was not sanguinary. No blood was shed but that of Tiptoft earl of Worcester, whose cruelty in his office of constable had earned him the title of *butcher*; he was taken in the top of a tree in the forest of Weybridge, and was tried before the earl of Oxford and executed. This nobleman was distinguished by his cultivation and patronage of literature, but letters did not produce on his mind the humanising effect perhaps too indiscriminately ascribed to them*.

It was not long however till Edward was again in arms (1471). The duke of Burgundy, afraid to assist him openly, sent him in secret 50,000 florins, and hired ships in which he and his followers embarked for England. Repulsed on the coast of Suffolk he steered for the Humber, and landed like Henry IV. at Ravenspur (March 14). Imitating that prince he pretended that he came only to claim the estates of the house of York, and his followers shouted "Long live king Henry!" as they passed through the towns and villages. At York he swore on the altar that he had no design on the crown. He passed near Pontefract, where Montague lay with a large force. Messages passed between them, and he went on unimpeded; his partisans flocked to him, and at Nottingham he saw himself at the head of a respectable force. He now flung off the mask; Clarence did the same; he ordered the men whom he had raised in the name of Henry to place the white rose on their gorgets, and joined his brother. Warwick, who had advanced to Coventry, having declined the combat which was proffered, Edward pushed on for London where his party was strong; for most of the wealthy citizens were his creditors; the city-dames too were all in the interest of the gay and gallant monarch, and there were about two thousand of his partisans in sanctuary ready to break out when necessary. The archbishop of York, who had charge of the city,

* See in Stow the details of his butcheries after the battle of Erpingham.

false as usual, caused him to be admitted, and swore allegiance to him. Edward, taking Henry with him, advanced to Barnet to meet Warwick, who was now approaching. Clarence sent to his father-in-law offering to mediate: "Go tell your master that Warwick, true to his word, is a better man than the false and perjured Clarence," was the indignant reply. Next morning (Easter-day, Apr. 14) before sunrise both armies were drawn out. The battle lasted six hours: at one time the Yorkists had the worst of it, and tidings of their defeat were conveyed to the city, but a mistake is said to have decided the fortune of the day. Edward's men wore on back and breast his badge, a sun; the earl of Oxford's men wore *his*, a star with rays, and Warwick's men taking them for enemies charged and drove them off the field. Warwick and Montague were both slain, Exeter was left for dead; Somerset and Oxford alone of the Lancastrian leaders escaped. Important as was this victory, we are told by an eye-witness that the whole number of the slain did not exceed eleven hundred. Edward returned to London in triumph; Henry was once more consigned to his prison in the Tower; the bodies of Warwick and Montague, after being exposed to public view for three days at St. Paul's, were buried at Bilsam abbey. Thus at length perished in battle the renowned earl of Warwick, the King-maker as he was called, it being the popular belief that the crown would always fall to the side which he espoused. It has been truly said of him that "he was distinguished by all the good and bad qualities which shine with most lustre in a barbarous age."

But another contest awaited Edward. The very day of the battle of Barnet queen Margaret landed at Plymouth. When she heard of that fatal event her firm spirit gave way, she sank to the ground in despair, and then took sanctuary with her son at the abbey of Beaulieu. But the earl of Devon, the lords Wenlock and St. John and others recalled her to energy. She advanced to Bath,




where many resorted to her standard, and it was resolved to try to effect a junction with the earl of Pembroke, who had a large force in Wales. But the people of Gloucester had secured the only bridge over the Severn, and when she came to Tewkesbury she learned that Edward was at hand with a more numerous army. The Lancastrians took their post in a strong inclosure without the town (May 4). Edward on coming up ordered his brother the duke of Gloucester, who led the van, to attack them; they gallantly repelled the assaults of the Yorkists. But the duke of Somerset sallying forth with a part of the troops, while lord Wenlock kept back the remainder, his men were driven back and cut to pieces; the Yorkists rushed in; Somerset in his rage rode up to Wenlock and clove his skull with his battle-axe. The queen and prince were made prisoners; the latter, it is said, being led before Edward in his tent, the victor demanded what had brought him to England. "To recover my father's kingdom and heritage from his father and grandfather to him, and from him to me lineally descended," replied the undaunted youth. Edward struck him in the face with his gauntlet, and Clarence, Gloucester, Hastings and Dorset instantly dispatched him with their swords*. The queen remained a prisoner.

The earl of Devon, sir Edmund Hampden, and about three thousand soldiers fell on the side of the Lancastrians. Somerset, St. John, and some others sought refuge in the church of the abbey; and when Edward entered it to return thanks for his victory, he granted a free pardon to all who were in it. Two days after however he repented of his mercy; they were dragged out, tried before a military tribunal and beheaded.

* In the Harleian MS., followed by Mr. Turner, and published by the Camden Society, it is said that he was "taken fleinge to the towne-wards and alayne in the felde." Another MS. says that he fell in battle (*ceciderat beligerens*). We do not think however with Mr. Turner that these are positive contradictions of the common story.

Edward re-entered London on the morning of Ascension-eve (May 22), and that evening the life of Henry was terminated by grief, as it was given out, but more probably (nay we might say certainly) by order of Edward, who wished to put a complete end to the hopes of the Lancastrians. The reason why he had not done so before is plain,—it would have been a useless crime as long as prince Edward lived. The actual guilt of the murder has been charged on the duke of Gloucester, but without sufficient evidence. The body, having been exposed like those of other murdered princes, was interred at Chertsey, and it soon was given out that miracles were performed at the tomb of that pious innocent monarch, who was revered as a martyr by his party.

Victorious over the Lancastrians, Edward now resolved on a war with France, and a league for this purpose was formed with the dukes of Burgundy and Brittany. Parliament was always liberal on occasion of these unjust and ridiculous claims to the crown of France: but their liberality not sufficing, Edward had recourse to a novel expedient; he summoned the most wealthy citizens before him, and pretending to be very poor begged that they would supply his wants. None of course dared to refuse, and the king facetiously named these compulsory gifts *benevolences*. In 1475 he passed over to Calais with fifteen hundred men-at-arms and fifteen thousand archers, and summoned the duke of Burgundy to join him. But that prince had already exhausted his resources, and Louis, who had no desire for a war, learning that lords Howard and Stanley and others were as little inclined to it, and Edward himself not extremely anxious for it, sent proposals of peace, and a truce was concluded for seven years. Edward was to be paid 75,000 crowns down and 50,000 crowns a year; the dauphin was to marry his eldest daughter; queen Margaret was to be liberated, on the payment of 50,000 crowns by Louis. The two monarchs then had a personal inter-



view on the bridge of Pecquigny near Amiens. A grating of wood was placed across it to prevent any treachery, and they conversed familiarly for some time. To keep up his influence in the English councils and avert future wars, Louis settled pensions on lord Hastings, lord Dorset and others of the king's ministers and favourites.

The duke of Clarence had perhaps never recovered the place which he had held in the king's mind previous to his union with Warwick, and he had now also a powerful enemy in his younger brother Richard. For this ambitious youth, in order to gain a share of the immense possessions of Warwick, had formed a plan to marry the young widow of the late prince of Wales ; while Clarence, who grasped at the whole inheritance, strove as much as he could to conceal his sister-in-law, who after a search of some months was found disguised as a cook-maid in London. Richard then espoused her, and arbitrators were appointed by the king to divide the property between them ; but hatred still rankled in the bosoms of the brothers. After the end of the French war the king, to avoid the odium of taxation, resumed most of the grants made of late years. Clarence by this regulation lost several estates, and he withdrew in anger from court. Some time after his duchess died (1476) ; and as the duke of Burgundy had been slain at Nanci, and his daughter Mary by his first marriage became the heiress of his dominions, Clarence, aided by his sister the dowager duchess, sought the hand of the princess ; but the king, from dislike and jealousy of him, gave every opposition in his power. It is also said that the queen was hostile to him on this account, as her own brother lord Rivers aspired to the hand of the heiress of Burgundy. He thus had powerful enemies and few friends.

It happened one day, it is said, that as the king was hunting at Harrow in Warwickshire, the seat of a gentleman named Thomas Burdett, who was in the service of Clarence, he killed a white stag the favourite of the owner.

Burdett, on hearing of the death of his stag, in his grief and anger wished that its horns were in the belly of him who killed it. It is not clear whether he knew that the king was the person; he was however thrown into prison, tried, and executed for treason*. About this time too one Stacey, a clergyman and chaplain to Clarence, was accused of magic and executed for this offence. Clarence loudly asserted the innocence of his friends; his words were repeated with exaggeration to the king, who committed him to the Tower, and then summoning a parliament (1478) accused him before it of high-treason. He was found guilty, sentence of death was passed on him, and he was recommitted to the Tower. His death was announced about ten days after; the manner of it is uncertain; the common report was that he was given his choice and selected drowning in a butt of malmsey. His brother, it is said, afterwards regretted his severity to him. As the chief gainers by the death of Clarence were the queen's family, it is not unlikely that they had stimulated the cruelty of the king.

The remaining events of Edward's reign were of little importance. While, enraged at the perfidious conduct of Louis respecting the marriage of the dauphin to his daughter, he was meditating war against him, he was seized with a disease which proved fatal. He died (Apr. 6, 1483) in the forty-second year of his age and twenty-third of his reign. On his death-bed he directed that restitution out of his treasures should be made to those whom he had wronged, or from whom he had extorted benevolences.

Edward was remarkably handsome in person, though toward the close of his life he became extremely corpulent. He was addicted to pleasure and indulgence of every kind.

* Such is the common story as told by More, Hollingshed and others. The indictment against Burdett says nothing of it; it charges him with conspiring with Stacey and another to calculate the nativities of the king and his son, to know when they should die, and of distributing seditious verses in Holborn.

CHAPTER XIII.

EDWARD V.—RICHARD III.*

1483—1485.

Parties at Court.—Imprisonment of Rivers and Grey.—Execution of Hastings.—Jane Shore.—Dr. Shaw's sermon.—Gloucester made king.—Murder of the princes.—Conspiracy and death of Buckingham.—Richard proposes to marry his niece.—Landing of Richmond.—Battle of Bosworth.—Constitution under the Plantagenets.—Religion of the fifteenth century.

THE new king was a boy only in his thirteenth year, and therefore unable to assume the government. The court was split into two parties, the one composed of the family of the queen, of whom the principal were the accomplished earl Rivers her brother, and the marquess of Dorset her son. The other party consisted of the lords Hastings, Howard, Stanley, and other members of the ancient nobility, who, though sincerely attached to the person and cause of the king, could ill brook the favour of the upstart Woodvilles. While Edward lived he kept both within bounds, but he feared lest the scenes of the minority of Henry VI. might be renewed; and when he found himself dying, he summoned both parties to his chamber, and made them embrace in his presence, fondly deeming thus to extinguish their long-cherished enmity.

The young king was proclaimed in the usual manner (Apr. 9). He was now residing at Ludlow with his uncle Rivers and his uterine brother lord Grey, under the pretext that his presence would restrain the turbulent Welsh, but in reality that he might become attached to his mother's family. The queen proposed that directions should be sent to lord Rivers to raise an army and conduct his

* Authorities: Cont. of Croyland, Rouse, More, Buck.

nephew to London ; but Hastings and his friends taking alarm strenuously opposed this course, and the queen in an evil hour consented that her son should travel with an escort of only two thousand horse.

The two first princes of the blood were Richard duke of Gloucester and Henry duke of Buckingham, who was descended from the youngest son of Edward III. The former was at this time commanding an army on the borders of Scotland ; when he heard of his brother's death he repaired to York, and summoned the gentry of the county to swear allegiance to his nephew, himself setting them the example. He wrote in terms of the utmost friendship to the queen and her family, and then moved toward London to be present at the coronation, which was fixed for the 4th of May. Meantime secret messages, of the exact import of which we are uninformed, passed between him, Hastings and Buckingham.

On the same day (Apr. 29) that the young king reached Stoney Stratford Gloucester arrived at Northampton, distant about ten miles. When Rivers and Grey heard he was there, they turned back to salute him in the name of the king. He received them with the greatest cordiality, and invited them to dinner. In the evening Buckingham arrived with three hundred horsemen. Rivers and Grey stopped for the night, and in the morning rode with the two dukes to wait on the king ; but just as they were entering Stoney Stratford, Gloucester turned and charged them with alienating from him the affections of his nephew ; they denied the charge, but were arrested and conveyed to the rear. The two dukes then waited on the king, and with bended knee professed their loyalty, assuring him that the marquess his brother and Rivers his uncle had compassed to rule the realm and to destroy its noble blood. "What my lord marquess," replied he, "may have done in London I cannot say, but I dare answer for my uncle Rivers and my brother here that they be innocent of any

such matter." The dukes then arrested sir Thomas Vaughan and sir Richard Hawse, two of his principal attendants, and commanded the rest of his retinue to disperse. They led the king back to Northampton, and sent the four prisoners northwards.

When intelligence of what had occurred at Stratford reached London, the queen in alarm and terror took sanctuary at Westminster, with her five daughters and her sons the marquess of Dorset and the duke of York. On the 4th of May Gloucester led the young king to London, where he was lodged in the bishop's palace, and received the homage of all present. A few days after, on the motion of Buckingham, he was removed to the Tower preparatory to his coronation, which was fixed for the 22nd of June; Gloucester was named Protector, and many of the great officers of state were displaced to make room for his creatures.

So far the conduct of Gloucester is at least suspicious, as we proceed it gradually darkens. Finding Hastings, Stanley and others, though hostile to the Woodvilles, firmly attached to the young king, he divided the council, letting them and their friends sit at the Tower, while *he* and his partisans met at Crosby-place* his own residence. When his secret plans were matured he went one day (June 13) to the Tower, and took his seat at the council-board. He assumed a gay and cheerful humour, and praising the strawberries which grew in the bishop of Ely's garden at Holborn, requested to have a dish of them for dinner. The bishop sent a servant to fetch them; the protector withdrew, as if on business; in about an hour after he returned, with an altered countenance, and sat down in silence. At length he cried, "Of what are they worthy who have compassed the death of me, the king's protector by nature as well as by law?" "To be pun-

* In Bishopsgate-street; a portion of it still exists.



ished," said Hastings, "as heinous traitors." "And that," replied he, "hath that sorceress my brother's wife with others her accomplices endeavoured to do." "See," continued he, "in what a miserable manner that sorceress and Shore's wife, with others their associates, have by their sorcery and witchcraft miserably destroyed my body." He then unbuttoned his sleeve, and showed them his left arm shrunk and withered. As those present knew that his arm had always been so, they saw that he wanted to quarrel with them. Hastings however, whose mistress Shore then was, replied, "Certainly, my lord, if they have indeed done any such thing they deserve to be both severely punished." "Do you answer me with *ifs* and *ands*, as if I charged them falsely?" cried the protector in a rage: "I tell you they have done it, and thou hast joined with them in this villainy." He struck the table with his fist; a man without shouted Treason! armed men rushed in; "I arrest thee, traitor!" cried Richard to Hastings; Stanley and the bishops of York and Ely were also arrested and sent to separate cells; to Hastings he said, "Shrive thyself apace, for by St. Paul I will not dine till I see thy head off!" He took a priest at a venture, and having made short shrift was then led down to the green before the chapel, and his head was struck off on a piece of timber that was lying there. After his dinner Richard summoned the principal citizens to attend him. He and Buckingham came forth in rusty armour, (suddenly taken as it were in the Tower for their defence,) and he told them that Hastings had intended murdering him and the duke, that he had not discovered this design till ten o'clock this morning, and had thus been obliged to provide for his defence. He requested them to inform their fellow-citizens of the truth of the case. A proclamation to the same effect was also issued, which was so neatly composed and fairly written, that it was plain to most people it could not have been drawn up after the death of Hastings.

On the very same day on which Hastings was thus murdered, Ratcliffe, one of Richard's principal confidants, came to Pontefract, where Rivers and his three friends now were. A court, presided over by the earl of Northumberland, was formed for their trial, and they were found guilty of conspiring the death of Richard. Their heads were struck off forthwith. The aged sir Thomas Vaughan appealing when on the scaffold to the tribunal of God against this murder, Ratcliffe said with a sneer, "You have made a goodly appeal,—lay down your head!" "I die in the right," replied he, "take heed you die not in the wrong!"—words proved by the event to be prophetic*.

The ultimate object of Richard must have been now apparent to every one, and each day added confirmation to suspicion. On the 16th he entered his barge with several nobles and prelates, and followed by a large body of armed men, and proceeded to Westminster in order to obtain the duke of York by force if not by fair means. He first sent a deputation of nobles, headed by the primate, to demand him from the queen, and Elizabeth knowing the inutility of resistance affected to acquiesce cheerfully. She called for her son, gave him a last embrace, and then turning about burst into tears. The child was conveyed in great pomp to the Tower, and the two innocent destined victims naturally received much delight at meeting again, little suspecting the fate that awaited them.

The protector now appeared in a new character, that of the rigid censor of morals. Among the mistresses of the late king was a woman named Jane Shore, the wife of a young and opulent citizen, whose virtue however had not been proof against the assaults of a king. "Proper she

* More. Rivers however could not have been there, as we have his will dated on the 23rd at Sheriff Hutton's; but as at the end of it are the following words: "My will is *now* to be buried before an image of our blessed lady Mary with my lord Richard (Grey)," etc. He must have been executed at Pontefract, but some days after the others. See Lingard and Turner.



was and fair," says sir Thomas More, "yet delighted not men so much in her beauty as in her pleasant behaviour; for a proper wit had she, and could both read well and write; ready and quick of answer, neither mute nor babbling. Many mistresses the king had, but her he loved; whose favour, to say the truth (for sin it were to belie the devil), she never abused to any man's hurt, but often employed to many a man's relief." After the death of the king she had become the mistress of Hastings, and she was now arrested as a participator in his conspiracy. The protector committed her to prison, seized her goods to the value of 3000 marks to his own use, and then had her tried in the spiritual court for lewdness and adultery. She was sentenced to perform public penance; and stript to her kirtle, with her feet bare, carrying a lighted taper, and preceded by the cross, she was made to walk to St. Paul's through the crowded streets*.

Having thus revived the memory of the licentious habits of his brother, Richard next proceeded to arraign the legitimacy of his children. On the 22nd of June Dr. Shaw, an Augustinian friar, brother to the lord-mayor, preached at St. Paul's Cross†. His text was "Bastard slips shall not strike deep roots" (Wisdom iv. 3); and taking occasion to notice the profligate habits of the late king, who made no scruple of promising marriage to seduce a woman, he proceeded to say that in this manner he had actually at one time caused a marriage to be celebrated between him-

* Jane afterwards lived with the marquess of Dorset. Lynom the solicitor-general was then about to marry her, and there is a letter extant from Richard to the chancellor on the subject, which is rather creditable to his feelings. The marriage however does not seem to have taken place. Jane lived to a great age in poverty and neglect, for she died in 1527. The popular tale of Richard's forbidding any one to relieve her, etc., is a popular tale and nothing more.

† This cross, which we shall find so often mentioned, was a large ornamented cross in front of St. Paul's cathedral. It was the great preaching-place on public occasions.

self and Eleanor the widow of lord Boteler of Sudely, by Stillington now bishop of Bath, who had since declared the same, and that consequently his marriage with Elizabeth Grey was illegal, and the issue illegitimate. It was even, he hinted, doubtful if Edward himself and the duke of Clarence (who however had been attainted) were the children of the duke of York, to whom they bore no resemblance. "But," cried the preacher, "my lord the protector, that very noble prince, the pattern of all heroic deeds, is the perfect image of his father; his features are the same, and the very express likeness of that noble duke." It had been arranged that the protector should have made his appearance at these words, and it was hoped that the people would be thus induced to cry "God save king Richard!" but it was badly managed: Shaw was too quick, or the duke too slow. He did not enter till after the words had been uttered; the maladroit preacher repeated them; the people easily saw through the device and remained silent. The protector gave a look of anger, and the baffled divine slunk away to his own house, which it is said he never again left, dying shortly after of pure chagrin.

This plan having failed it was resolved to employ a nobler advocate. On the following Tuesday (June 24) Buckingham harangued the people at Guildhall, and, having alluded to the topics handled in the sermon on the last Sunday, maintained that the right to the crown lay with Richard. Still the people were silent; he then demanded an answer one way or the other; a few hired voices from the end of the hall cried "King Richard!" He gave them his thanks, and requested them to accompany him next day to the protector.

Next morning Buckingham, the mayor, and several lords and principal citizens repaired to Baynard castle, where Richard resided, and demanded an audience. Richard affecting terror would only show himself from a win-

dow: Buckingham then read an address, as from the estates of the realm, embodying the charges made against the late king and his marriage, and calling on the duke of Gloucester to assume the crown, to which he was lawful heir. Richard pretended great reluctance, spoke of his affection for his nephews and of his aversion to royalty. "Sir," said Buckingham, "the free people of England will never submit to the rule of a bastard, and if the lawful heir refuses the sceptre they know where to find one who will gladly accept it." Richard paused at this bold language, and then declared that he felt it to be his duty to obey the voice of his people. The farce thus terminated; on the following day (26th) he took possession of the throne.

Richard lost no time in giving the sanction of a coronation to his title. He and his wife the lady Anne Neville were crowned (July 6) with great magnificence. He then proceeded to reward his adherents, and to seek to gain by clemency his opponents. Lord Stanley was set at liberty, and made steward of the household; his wife the countess of Richmond bore the queen's train at the coronation; the archbishop of York also was set free, and the bishop of Ely was committed to the charge of Buckingham. The king then set forth on a progress through the kingdom: he visited Oxford, Gloucester and Worcester, whence he went to Warwick, where he remained a week, and thence proceeded through Coventry, Leicester, Nottingham and Pontefract to York, where, to gratify the people of the north, his most faithful adherents, he caused himself and his queen to be crowned over again with the same pomp as in London.

It was while he was in this progress that he filled up the measure of his guilt. He sent orders from Warwick to sir Richard Brackenbury lieutenant of the Tower to put the two princes to death. Brackenbury however refused; sir James Tyrrel master of the horse was then sent with

orders to receive the keys and custody of the Tower for one night. Brackenbury dared not refuse, and that very night Tyrrel went with Dighton one of his grooms and Forest 'a noted ruffian' to the chamber where the princes lay; he himself remained outside, while his agents went in and smothered the sleeping children with the bed-clothes. They then called in Tyrrel to view the dead bodies, and by his command buried them at the foot of the staircase. All concerned were amply rewarded by the king; Brackenbury got manors and pensions, Tyrrel was made steward of the duchy of Cornwall and governor of Glamorganshire, Forest keeper of the wardrobe at Baynard castle, and Dighton was appointed bailiff of Aiton in Staffordshire*.

At this very time there was an extensive conspiracy on foot to dethrone the usurper, and to set the rightful prince in his place; and, what may excite surprise, the duke of Buckingham was at the head of it. What his motives for so sudden a change could have been it is difficult to say. He had been Richard's chief supporter all through, but he had been most amply rewarded, and he had no ingratitude to complain of. He may have grown suspicious and fearful of the king whom he had set up; he may have been urged by mortified vanity, or, as it is said, the eloquence of his prisoner Morton bishop of Ely may have wrought a change in him; he was moreover married to a sister of the queen Elizabeth, and we know not what the influence of his wife may have been: at all events he resolved to restore the young prince. Richard however, when he discovered the plot, caused the death of the princes to be made public. This somewhat disconcerted the conspirators; but as they could not now recede, they gave ear to the proposal of the bishop of Ely on the part of the Lancastrians that they should offer the crown to Henry earl

* See Appendix (W).

Dorset and the bishop of Exeter made their escape to Brittany, most of the others concealed themselves, and very few executions took place.

Richard thought he might now venture to summon a parliament. Whether, as is said, fear was the motive or not, no more obsequious assembly could be than that which met (Nov. 11). His title was fully recognised, and the succession settled on his son Edward prince of Wales. An act of attainder and forfeiture was then passed against the heads of the late insurrection, and another act abrogating and annulling for ever all exactions under the name of benevolence.

Though Richard had caused the marriage of his brother to be declared null, and had deprived his widow of her dower as queen, he knew that the validity of that marriage was generally acknowledged, and that the Yorkists now regarded her eldest daughter as the rightful heir to the crown. He had also learned that at the festival of Christmas five hundred of the Yorkist exiles had sworn fealty to Henry in Brittany, on his pledging himself to make her his queen in case of his defeating the usurper. To counteract this plan he addressed himself to the queen-dowager, and having pledged himself by a solemn oath that they should be treated with all due respect as his kinswomen, he induced her and her daughters to quit the sanctuary and come to court (Mar. 1, 1484). It seems to have been his intention to have married the princess Elizabeth, whom he treated with marked attention, to his son Edward. But the very next month this young prince died suddenly, to the extreme grief of both his parents. The king's favour to Elizabeth however continued unchanged, and she was attached to the person of the queen. John de la Pole earl of Lincoln, son to the king's sister the duchess of Suffolk, was declared heir presumptive to the crown.

At Christmas the king held his court at Westminster



with extraordinary magnificence, and it was remarked that his niece always appeared attired like the queen. Soon after the latter fell sick (1485), and Richard immediately offered his hand to Elizabeth, assuring her that the queen would die in February, and that he would then procure a dispensation from Rome for their marriage. To the disgrace of the queen-dowager she gave a ready consent to the union of her daughter with the murderer of her brother and her three sons, and an extant letter of the princess shows the indecent impatience which she felt for this unnatural marriage*. Queen Anne did in effect die ere long (Mar. 16), and there are grounds for suspecting that he who foretold her death took means to cause his prophecy to be fulfilled. But now an unexpected difficulty arose; when he communicated his project to Ratcliffe and Catesby, his chief advisers and confidants†, they opposed it in the strongest manner, representing how the moral feeling of the nation would be shocked by this incestuous union, which would convert to certainty the suspicion people had of his having removed his queen by poison; and this might deprive him of the support of the men of the north, who were attached to him chiefly on her account as the daughter of Warwick. It is said that their secret motive was fear lest Elizabeth should take vengeance for the murder of her family; their arguments however prevailed, and in the hall of the Temple Richard solemnly declared before the mayor, aldermen and commoners that he never had thought of such a marriage. He wrote to the same effect to the citizens of York.

The mind of the king is now said to have become a prey to terror and anxiety, and he was haunted, we are told, by

* See Appendix (X).

† "The Cat, the Rat, and Lovel our dog,
Rule all England under the hog,"


(the "bristled boar" was Richard's cognisance,) was a popular distich at this time. It cost its author his life.

fearful dreams caused by his crimes. His money too was all expended; he could not venture to apply to parliament, and he was therefore obliged to levy benevolences (which had been abolished in his preceding parliament) on the citizens under another name, which lost him their favour. Many now deserted to Henry; the lord Stanley, whose influence was great and who was married to Henry's mother, caused the king great uneasiness, though he had lavished favours on him, and Stanley had never given him the slightest ground for suspicion. To secure the fidelity of that nobleman he retained his son lord Strange at court by way of a hostage.

At length, being assured that the king of France had given Henry permission to hire troops and that a fleet lay ready at the mouth of the Seine, Richard put forth a proclamation (June 23), calling the exiles "murderers, adulterers and extortioners," and asserting that Henry meditated unheard-of slaughters and confiscations, etc., and calling on all true Englishmen to aid him in the defence of their wives and properties. He then fixed his head-quarters at Nottingham (July 24), and ere long he received intelligence of the landing of Henry at Milford Haven (Aug. 7).

Henry marched through North Wales, where though none opposed few joined him, and when he reached Shrewsbury he had but four thousand men. Urged by the secret assurances of many who could not yet declare themselves, he still pressed on toward Leicester, where Richard now lay with a numerous army, having been joined by the duke of Norfolk, the earl of Northumberland, lord Lovel and Brackenbury with their levies. Lord Stanley had excused himself under the pretext of illness, but his son being detected in an attempt to escape he was obliged in order to save him to hasten to join the royal standard.

On the 21st of August Richard moved from Leicester, and encamped about two miles from the town of Bosworth. Henry having been joined by the Stanleys moved from Tamworth to Atherston, and next morning both armies



advanced to Redmore. Henry had now six thousand men, his rival double the number. Richard was dismayed when he saw the Stanleys opposed to him, but he roused his wonted courage ; the vanguards under the duke of Norfolk and the earls of Oxford engaged for some time ; Richard then seeing Northumberland inactive and the rest of his troops wavering, spurred his horse and rushed, crying "Treason, treason !" to where he espied Henry ; he killed sir William Brandon the standard-bearer, unhorsed sir John Cheney, and had made a furious blow at Henry himself, which was warded off by sir William Stanley, when he was thrown from his horse and slain. Lord Stanley taking up the crown which he wore placed it on the head of Henry, and shouts of "Long live king Henry !" were instantly raised. The duke of Norfolk, lord Ferrers, Ratcliffe and Brackenbury, with about three thousand men, were slain ; the victors lost but one hundred men. The body of Richard was stript, thrown across a horse, and carried to Leicester, where it was interred in the church of the Grey friars. The blood of Catesby and two others alone was shed after the victory.

Richard was but two-and-thirty years old when he thus perished, the victim of his ambition. In his person he was small, and the defect in his left arm and an elevation of one shoulder deformed him in some measure, but his face was handsome and like his father's. There is no foundation for the common tale of his being born with teeth, and only what we have stated for that of his being humpbacked. He was brave, loved magnificence, and justice also when it did not interfere with his ambition, but in the gratification of this passion we have seen that he would stop at no crime. Had he come honestly by his crown he would probably have worn it to his own honour and to the advantage of his people.

With Richard ended the Plantagenet dynasty, which had ruled England nearly three centuries and a half ; and the

battle of Bosworth terminated the Civil Wars of the Roses, which with intermissions had lasted for a space of thirty years. It was a remarkable feature in these wars that the evils of them fell chiefly on the nobility; for with one exception the slaughter in the field was not considerable, and there was none of that petty warfare in different parts of the country by which in civil wars which interest the feelings and passions of the middle and lower orders so much more blood is shed than in regular battles. Successive generations of the houses of Neville, Pole and Clifford were cut off on the field or scaffold; many were reduced to the most abject state of poverty*. "I myself," says Comines, "saw the duke of Exeter, the king of England's brother-in-law, walking barefoot after the duke of Burgundy's train and earning his bread from door to door." "In my remembrance," says the same writer, "eighty princes of the blood royal of England perished in these convulsions; seven or eight battles were fought in the course of thirty years; their own country was desolated by the English as cruelly as the former generation had wasted France." In this however there seems to be some exaggeration; there certainly did not fall that number of princes of the blood, neither could the desolation have been so very great.

* The story of the shepherd lord Clifford, to which Wordsworth's poetry has lent additional attractions, strongly resembles that of Feridoon in the romantic annals of Persia.

CHAPTER XIV.

STATE OF THE CONSTITUTION.

Nature of the Constitution.—Abuses of prerogative.—Wardship and escheat.
 —Forest-laws.—Constable's and Marshal's courts.—Purveyance.—Taxation.
 —Pardons.—Maintenance.—Army.—Navy.—Punishment of Crime.—Religion.

WE have thus brought our history to the end of the Plantagenet dynasty, a race of princes not excelled in intellectual vigour by any line of sovereigns. As with them the feudal and papal period of England may be said to terminate, the next period being one of transition to the present altered condition of society, we will conclude it by a sketch of the political and religious state of the country at this time.

The constitution of England under the Plantagenets was a monarchy limited by law, which law the king could not alter at his will. "A king of England," says sir John Fortescue writing to the son of Henry VI., "cannot at his pleasure make any alterations in the law of the land, for the nature of his government is not only regal but political." Yet the king was not merely a hereditary executive magistrate, he had extensive prerogatives annexed to his dignity, and the great object of the patriots of this period was to limit these rights and restrain their abuse. The redress of grievances was usually a matter of bargain between the king and parliament, *they* giving a subsidy, and *he* engaging to correct what was complained of. Still the kings would, when they had the power, go on in their old course; but the parliament, by perseverance, and by taking advantage of foreign wars, disputed successions and other circumstances, gradually set limits to prerogative; and an able writer of the present day has with reason thus ex-

pressed himself*: "I know not whether there are any essential privileges of our countrymen, any fundamental securities against arbitrary power, so far as they depend upon positive institution, which may not be traced to the time when the house of Plantagenet filled the English throne."

The great cause of this rational limitation of power and establishment of the principles of true liberty seems to have been the peculiar situation of the English aristocracy. The nobles were not, like those of the continent, the lords of extensive continuous territories, who might singly set the crown at defiance. Their manors lay scattered through various counties; the power of the sovereign could at once crush any refractory vassal; it was only by union among themselves, and by gaining the people to their side, that they could maintain their rights and limit the royal prerogative. In this manner the interests of the nobility became identified with those of the people, and hence their names are associated with every struggle for liberty throughout our history. This was further increased by the remarkable circumstance that the English was the only nobility which did not form a peculiar class, or caste. In England the actual holder of the title alone was noble; his sons and brothers were simple commoners, and ranked with the people. Hence arose that melting into one another of the various grades of society only to be found in this country; and as the English nobles never claimed any exemption from taxes and other burdens, their privileges have never excited jealousy or hatred. For all these advantages we are mainly indebted to the high power of the crown established by the Anglo-Norman monarchs, combined with the free principles of government transmitted by our Saxon forefathers.

The abuses of the prerogative against which the efforts

* Hallam, iii. 301.



of our patriots were directed from the period of Magna Charta were the following:

1. The feudal rights of wardship and escheat. Of the legality of these there could be no question, but the exercise of them gave occasion to much injustice and oppression. The royal officers, for example, often under the pretext of wardship took possession of lands not held immediately of the crown, or they claimed as escheats lands of which the right heir was in existence, or seized as forfeited lands which had been entailed. The remedy in such cases was usually slow and uncertain, and certainly expensive as neither costs nor damages could be recovered against the crown.


2. The Forest-laws though greatly tamed from their original ferocity were still a source of oppression. The king's officers were frequently attempting to recover the *purlieus*, or those lands adjoining the forests which had originally belonged to them but had been disafforested by the Charter of Forests; and though frequent perambulations had ascertained the proper limits of the forests, the holders of the *purlieus* were continually disturbed in their possessions.

3. The constable and marshal of England possessed a jurisdiction which within the realm only extended to military offences. They however frequently assumed the power of inquiring into treasons and felonies, which were offences at common law, and even took on them to decide cases of trespass and civil contracts. As their court was not, like those of law, regulated by fixed rules and principles, it was more easily converted into an instrument of oppression.

4. But no grievance seems to have been so galling as the abuse of *Purveyance*, that "outrageous and intolerable grievance and source of infinite damage to the people," as the parliament termed it in the reign of Edward III. *Purveyance*, of which traces may be discovered in the Anglo-

Saxon times, was the right of taking, even without the consent of the owner, but at a fair price, provisions and whatever else was requisite for the king and his household. It also extended to the right of impressing horses and carriages when the king was on a journey, and of providing lodgings for his train. As the purveyors set the prices of the articles which they took, and usually paid for them by tallies on the exchequer, the people had not only to endure their insolence, but to see too low a price set on their goods, often to see them taken without any payment at all, and very generally to find the exchequer empty when they presented their tallies. To aggravate the evil, not only the king but several of the great lords, especially in turbulent times, claimed the right of purveyance. The commons made every effort, but in vain, to restrain this oppressive prerogative; it continued till the final demise of feudalism.

5. The abuses of taxation. The principle of tallages and of the subsidies which succeeded them, was that a man should give a certain proportion of his moveable property to the crown. It was therefore the interest of the payer to estimate his property as low, of the tax-gatherer as high, as possible. Complaints were therefore continually made of the collectors entering men's houses and searching their most secret apartments. In the eighth year of Edward III. the king directed those who were to levy the subsidy then granted, to compound with the different townships for a certain sum, which they were to raise among themselves in what manner they pleased. This then became the rule, and henceforth tenths and fifteenths were regarded as fixed sums estimated by the assessment of 8 Edw. III. The other sources of revenue, namely, the duties on wool, hides and other exports, and the tonnage and poundage, or two shillings on every tun of wine and sixpence on every pound of other goods imported, and the tolls at fairs, markets, etc., gave abundant



occasions for complaint of the extortions of the royal officers.

6. Another grievance which was a frequent subject of complaint was the abuse of the prerogative of granting pardons. Robbers and other felons were thus continually withdrawn from the hands of justice by the influence of some nobleman who protected them, or who sold them his good offices. In a petition of the commons in the twenty-second of Edward III. they pray that, "whereas it is notorious how robbers and malefactors infest the country, the king would charge the great men of the land that none such be maintained by them, privily or openly, but that they lend assistance to arrest and take such evil-doers." For the barons, as the feudal system declined, sought to keep up their power and influence by having at their devotion large bodies of dependents. These men were mostly of lawless irregular habits, and if they lent their lord the aid of their arms in his private broils and contests they expected to be supported by him in return when for their misdeeds they had fallen into the hands of justice. As it was the custom of the lords to give liveries and badges to their retainers, which acted as a mark of union among them, statutes, as we have seen, were made to restrain this practice, but they were generally treated with neglect and liveries were given as before.

Another practice of the nobles, also a subject of constant complaint, was that of *Maintenance*, or confederating to support each other in legal suits. Men were thus enabled to make forcible entry on lands which they claimed, and the course of justice was impeded by influence or intimidation; parties in a suit, for example, being often prevented from appearing by armed bodies of men.


During the Plantagenet period the mode of raising armies underwent some alteration. As the feudal system was only adapted for defensive warfare, the kings in their

wars with France and Scotland chiefly employed mercenary forces, not merely the soldiers of fortune who were then so plentiful, but their own barons and knights, with whom they contracted for the service of themselves and their military followers for certain periods at certain rates. The crown, however, frequently stretched its power and forced the counties to send men-at-arms and other soldiers to serve in the royal army. They were to receive pay from the king, but the expense of equipping the inferior men and sending them to the army (known by the name of coat-and-conduct money), mostly fell on the counties and was the subject of constant complaint.

The troops consisted of: 1. Men-at-arms; these were the same as during the former period, only that now they wore plate-armour instead of the less cumbrous mail. 2. Hobblers, a species of light cavalry. 3. Archers, who bore bows of six feet in length, from which they sent those showers of arrows a cloth-yard long, which won Creci and so many other fields. Occasionally the archers were mounted on horseback. 4. The remaining foot-soldiers bearing spears, among whom were generally a body of Welsh armed with lances and long knives, and frequently bands of the native Irish.

The pay of these troops was enormously high; an earl or baron receiving 8*s.* or 6*s.* 8*d.* a day, a banneret 4*s.*, a knight 2*s.*, an esquire or man-at-arms 1*s.*, a hobbler or mounted archer 6*d.*, a foot-archer 3*d.*, the rest 2*d.* Money is generally thought to have been of ten times more value then than it is now.

The royal navy was very small, consisting of merely a few gallies and other ships. The Cinque Ports were by their charter obliged to furnish a fleet of fifty-seven sail whenever they were called on, and the crown exercised the prerogative of pressing merchant-vessels and seamen at its will. As cannon did not as yet form a part of the equipment of a man-of-war, a merchantman became such by



merely putting soldiers on board instead of a cargo: the usual complement was sixty archers and forty other armed men. Both sailors and soldiers were paid by the crown: the seaman's pay was 3*d.* a day.

The punishments of crime in this period were severe, and in many cases barbarous. A vigorous state of the public mind seems connected with a stern and rigorous execution of justice. Robbers and other felons (if not saved in the way already mentioned) were hung without mercy. The *Peine forte et dure* came into use in this period. This was employed when a prisoner refused to answer. He was laid on his back naked in a low dark chamber, and as great a weight of iron as he could bear and more laid on him. On the first day he got three morsels of coarse bread, on the second three draughts of standing water, and so on till he answered or died*.

Nothing could be more barbarous than the practice of emboweling traitors. The following account in the case of sir Thomas Blount, executed in the first year of Henry IV., will give a lively idea of it†. "He was hanged, but the halter was soon cut and he was made to sit on a bench before a great fire, and the executioner came with a razor in his hand and knelt before sir Thomas, whose hands were tied, begging him to pardon his death as he must do his office. Sir Thomas asked, 'Are you the person appointed to deliver me from this world?' The executioner answered, 'Yes, sir; I pray you pardon me.' And sir Thomas kissed him and pardoned him his death. The executioner knelt down and opened his belly, and cut out his bowels straight from below the stomach and tied them with a string that the wind of the heart should not escape, and threw the bowels into the fire. Then sir Thomas was sitting before the fire, his belly open and his bowels burn-

* This was not abolished by law till the middle of the 18th century.

† Lingard, iv. 279, from a MS. Relacion, &c.

ing before him. Sir Thomas Erpyngham, the king's chamberlain, insulting Blount, said to him in derision, 'Go seek a master that can cure you.' Blount only answered, '*Te deum laudamus*, blessed be the day on which I was born, and blessed be this day; for I shall die in the service of my sovereign lord, the noble king Richard.' The executioner knelt down before him, kissed him in an humble manner, and soon after his head was cut off and he was quartered."

The religious aspect of England at this time was also of a dark hue. The mighty tree of papal supremacy had spread its capacious shade over the whole of Europe, excluding the brightest beams of the Sun of Righteousness, and beneath it flourished a rank crop of baleful superstitions. We are far, however, from viewing Popery as a system purely pernicious; on the contrary, we deem that it was productive of much good, and was perhaps that which was best suited to the times in which it flourished. But since it has of late years, by audaciously perverting history, sought to represent itself as without stain or blemish, and the Reformation as in every sense a misfortune to the world, we will briefly state what the religion of England really *was* in the fifteenth century.

At the head of the doctrines taught by the clergy stood the portent of *transubstantiation*, which, for the sake of understanding literally one of the simplest of metaphors, sets reason and the testimony of all the senses at defiance, and establishes an absurdity hardly to be paralleled in the Brahminism of India or the Lamaism of Tibet. By this the creature creates the Creator, and the same body is actually and entirely present in the most distant regions at the very same instant of time! Gregory VII. either rejected this doctrine or shrank from establishing it by the papal authority; but the intrepid Innocent III., in the

fourth council of Lateran (1215), declared it to be the doctrine of the church, and it still remains the badge of Rome, a standing proof that she sets reason and sense at nought. Our fathers were further taught to believe that the priest who could thus create his Maker, and offer him up in sacrifice on the altar, possessed the power of removing or mitigating the penalties of sin in the future world. There was a place, they were told, on the confines of hell, and so situated as to receive a moderate portion of its flames. It was named Purgatory from its nature, and thither after death were sent the souls of all but the innocent baptized babes, the perfect saints, or the incorrigibly wicked, to purge away by fire the stains of sin. The period of their sufferings might, however, be shortened by prayers and masses; and the dying sinner if wealthy could, by leaving money to the church, obtain a relaxation or remission of his generally well-merited torments. He might also at any time during his life, by paying money or by visiting some place of devotion, obtain an *indulgence* to exempt him from the punishment due to one or more of his transgressions: for one drop of Christ's blood, it was said, sufficing to redeem the whole world, all the rest of His merits, which were infinite, together with all that the Saints had done beyond what was necessary for their own salvation, went to compose a great magazine of *merits* for the benefit of sinful men. The custody of this was committed to the pope, and money was the key that usually oped the holy treasure-house.

The church had adopted most of the practices and principles of the ancient heathenism. A system equally tasteless as false of accounting for the origin of the elegant polytheism of Greece, by supposing its gods to have been merely deified men, had been devised, and this the Fathers of the church embraced. But soon it became the belief that what was fabled of Jupiter and Apollo was true of

Peter and Paul and the other apostles, martyrs, and confessors. A new Olympus speedily appeared*. The courts of heaven were thronged with the beatified saints, who saw in God all that took place on earth, and heard the prayers addressed to them by their votaries below for the exercise of their power or their mediation in their favour. High above all in rank and power stood the Queen of Heaven of the new mythology, the Virgin, born without sin, dead without pain, and translated bodily, like her divine son, to heaven, where she still exercises over him the mild authority of a mother. Such were the Virgin and the Saints in heaven; on earth churches and festivals were dedicated, and prayers were offered to them; their relics, that is, their bones, their hair, the very parings of their nails and the fragments of their garments, or the implements of their torture, were inclosed in costly shrines, adorned with precious gems and worshipped by the people. Their images, especially those of the Virgin, were also the objects of adoration; pilgrimages were made to them, and rich offerings deposited on their altars. Thus, while the ancient heathens directed their worship to beings whom they regarded as superior to man in nature, the Christians of the middle ages adored their fellow-mortals; their idolatry was as gross as that of the ancient world; the legends of their saints were frequently of a far more immoral tone than the mythes of Greece, and, what these properly understood were not, often highly impious†.

* The Romish saints are always termed *Divi*; thus Divus Thomas is the style of Thomas à Becket. "*Deos*," says a heathen (Servius on *Æn.* xii. 139), "*æternos dicimus, divos vero qui ex hominibus sunt.*" In another place (*Æn.* v. 45,) he adds, "*unde divos etiam imperatores vocamus.*" How closely papal Rome imitated heathen Rome!

† Hallam (*Middle Ages*, iii. 349), after relating some of the impious legends of the Virgin circulated by the monks, thus expresses himself: "Whether the superstition of these dark ages had actually passed that point when it becomes more injurious to public morals and the welfare of society than the entire absence of all religious notions, is a very complex question, upon which I would by no means pronounce an affirmative decision."

This system of polytheism and idolatry was, however, not without its bright spots. The aspect of the court of heaven presented in the Romish books of devotion is very magnificent and attractive. But by far the most seductive portion of the system is the worship of the Virgin, the most beautiful piece of superstition ever devised! The idea of the "pure god," Phœbus Apollo, in the Grecian system was certainly beautiful and, we may add, elevating, but who could think of comparing it with that of the Virgin? The Crishna of Hindoo, the Balder of Scandinavian polytheism, fall still more short of it. A woman lovely, gentle, pure and stainless, whose heart wells forth streams of holy love and benevolence, exalted to supreme power in heaven and earth, must, in the eyes of the pious votary, have been invested with a radiance of mild, tempered divinity not to be conceived by those who are not themselves believers. Unfortunately the beautiful conception was but too often spoiled by the vulgar and impious legend which made the divine object partial, revengeful, vain and venal. Among the attractions of this system must also be enumerated the sensible ones of the splendid habits of the clergy; the well-marshalled processions, bearing crosses and banners; the magnificence of architecture; and the noble strains of music that pealed through the aisles of the stately cathedral, and adorned the service of even the most humble chapel.

The clergy themselves, it is probable, believed implicitly in the popular religion. But their belief stood not in the way of their inventing the most monstrous and atrocious fables of the miracles performed by the Saints or their relics, and thus extorting money or lands from the credulous votaries. By means of these, and of the doctrines of purgatory and merits, the church had gradually contrived to gain possession of one fifth of the lands of the kingdom. The morals of the clergy were in general profligate, though beyond question there were among them in all ages shining

models of goodness and piety. In the year 1449 the clergy had a petition presented in parliament, stating that many priests, secular as well as religious, had been grievously vexed and troubled wrongfully by divers indictments of felony, and praying that every priest might be pardoned for all manner of felonies of rape done before the 1st of June next coming, and from all forfeitures of taking excessive salaries, provided a noble (6*s.* 8*d.*) for every priest in the kingdom, were paid to the king*. What, we may ask, must have been the morality of the clergy who could present such a petition?

Ignorance and immorality are usual, though not necessary companions. We may therefore not be surprised to find that the great bulk of the clergy were grossly ignorant. But few of them knew the meaning of the prayers they muttered daily in an unknown tongue; and to read and study the Scriptures even in the Latin version was regarded as needless to those whose religion was almost totally made up of forms and ceremonies. The ignorance of the laity was of course greater if possible than that of their spiritual guides.

We are not, however, to suppose that the mind of Europe was totally enthralled to superstition in these times. It was far otherwise, as the dreadful crusade against the Albigenses, and the persecution of the Lollards and other heretics, as they were styled by the church, too clearly prove. Though the clergy exerted themselves to the utmost, though they filled the prisons with those who dared to think, and kindled the piles for those who refused to recant, the truth still continued to spread, and more and more was sown every day of the seed which was to yield such an abundant harvest of mental liberty. We have now strong grounds for believing that Dante, Petrarca, and their fellows, whose genius sheds such a lustre on the

* Rolls Parl., vol. v. p. 153; Turner, *Hist. of England*, iii. 140.

middle ages, were but the organs of an extensive sect or party, whose bond of union was hostility to the papacy, its claims, its doctrines, and its practices*. The middle ages thus rise in moral dignity, while we view in them the struggle of man's intellectual nature against superstition, upheld by fraud and cruelty; and we learn to acknowledge our debt of gratitude to the men whose unremitting efforts achieved the victory of which we now enjoy the benefits.

* The writer here alludes to what he regards as the extraordinary discoveries of his most valued friend Professor Gabriele Rossetti, in his "Comento Analitico" on Dante, his "Spirito Antipapale de' Classici Italiani," and his "Mistero dell' Amor Platonico." He at the same time will not pledge himself for the correctness of all the theories and opinions in those important works, as on some points he differs with the profound and sagacious author.

HOUSE OF TUDOR.

CHAPTER I.

HENRY VII.*

1485—1509.

The sweating sickness.—King's marriage.—Lambert Simnell.—Battle of Stoke.—Coronation of the queen.—Affairs of Brittany.—Perkin Warbeck. Execution of the earl of Warwick.—Marriage and death of prince Arthur.—The king's avarice.—His death and character.

THE first act of the new king was to direct that the princess Elizabeth and her cousin, the earl of Warwick, whom the late usurper had placed at Sheriff-Hutton in Yorkshire, should be conveyed to London, the former to be restored to her mother, the latter to be immured in the Tower. He then proceeded by easy journeys to the capital. The lord mayor and aldermen met him without the city (Aug. 28); he passed through the streets in a close litter to St. Paul's, where a *Te Deum* was chanted, and he then took up his abode at the house of the bishop. While there he solemnly renewed his engagement to marry the princess Elizabeth, but declined espousing her till after he should have been crowned and have held a parliament.

The coronation would have taken place immediately but for the prevalence of the disease named the Sweating Sickness from its nature. It was a rapid fever, carrying people off in four-and-twenty hours, which time if they got

* Authorities :—Bacon, Polydore Virgil, Hall, Fabyan, and the other chroniclers.

through they were almost sure of recovery. It lasted but a month, and was regarded as being in the atmosphere, and not an epidemic or contagious malady.

The king was crowned on the 30th of October by the primate. He was frugal of his honours on this occasion, only making twelve bannerets, and raising his uncle, Jasper Tudor earl of Pembroke, to the dignity of duke of Bedford, lord Stanley to that of earl of Derby, and sir Edward Courtenay to that of earl of Devon. He appointed a body of archers to attend him in future, under pretext of imitating the state of foreign princes. They were named Yeomen of the Guard.

When parliament met (Nov. 11) the matter of most importance that occupied it was the settlement of the crown. Henry's title rested on three grounds: his pledged marriage with Elizabeth; his descent from the house of Lancaster; the right of conquest. The last was too odious to be put forward prominently; the first was disagreeable to his own prejudices and those of his Lancastrian adherents, and would only secure the succession to his issue by Elizabeth. "He therefore," says Bacon, "rested on the title of Lancaster in the main*, using the marriage and the victory as supporters;" and in the act of settlement it was merely enacted, that "the inheritance of the crown should be, rest, remain and abide in the most royal person of the then sovereign lord king Henry VII., and the heirs of his body lawfully coming." As all mention of the princess seemed studiously avoided, those of both parties who had looked forward to the termination of the differences between the white and the red rose grew alarmed. Shortly after (Dec. 10) the commons took occasion to petition the king to take the princess to wife; the peers readily ex-


* No title could be weaker than this. Henry claimed through his mother, (who was still alive,) the sole heiress of the duke of Somerset, descended from one of the children whom Catherine Swynford bore to John of Gaunt before marriage, and who when legitimated were expressly excluded from all claim to the crown.

pressed their concurrence; Henry gave a gracious promise, and during the recess he espoused Elizabeth (Jan. 18, 1486).

In this parliament an act of attainder was passed against Richard III., the duke of Norfolk, and his son the earl of Surrey, the lords Lovel, Zouch, Ferrers, and about two dozen of others; all grants made by the crown since the 34th of Henry VI. were resumed; and a general pardon was issued in the king's name to all the adherents of the late usurper.

After the dissolution the king set out on a progress through the kingdom, and as the North had been most attached to Richard, he proceeded thither first, hoping to gain the people by spending the summer among them. While he was keeping his Easter at Lincoln he heard that lord Lovel had left the sanctuary at Colchester, and when he reached Pontefract he learned that Lovel had raised a force and intended surprising him on his entry into York. But this lord finding the royal train too numerous gave up his project, and having permitted his followers to disperse, made his own escape to Flanders. The king remained three weeks in York, and then returned to London by way of Worcester, Gloucester and Bristol. During his absence the queen held her court at Winchester, with her mother and sisters, and her mother-in-law the countess of Richmond. Here, at the end of her eighth month, (Sept. 20,) she was delivered of her first child, a son, who was named Arthur, after the famous British hero, from whose lineage the king affected to be sprung on the father's side.

The evident favour shown by the king to the Lancastrian party gave great offence to the Yorkists; they were also displeased at the want of respect to the queen in deferring her coronation; the manners of the king too were cold and repulsive, totally different from those of the former kings of England. This state of discontent was taken advantage of for introducing the most extraordinary



imposture recorded in history ; for though many have personated dead or missing princes, who ever heard of an impostor pretending to be a prince who was known to be alive and could be produced at any time ?

There was a priest at Oxford named Richard Simons, or Symmonds, a man of a subtle, enterprising temper. He had a pupil about the age of fifteen years named Lambert Simnell, the son of a baker, or, as others said, of an organ-maker. This youth was of a handsome, engaging countenance ; and the priest, whether actuated by hopes of great advantages to himself if the imposture should succeed, or, as is more probable, acting merely as the agent of higher persons, instructed him to assume the character of Richard duke of York, who, it was rumoured, had escaped from the Tower in the late reign. But on a report of the escape of the young earl of Warwick, Simons, or his directors, changed the plan, and it was agreed that Simnell should personate this prince. As during the abode of the duke of York in Ireland as chief governor in the time of Henry .VI. the Anglo-Irish had become strongly attached to his person, family and cause, it was resolved that the drama should open in that country. Accordingly Simons and his pupil landed in Dublin, where the earl of Kildare, the lord deputy, without hesitation or inquiry, at once acknowledged the pretended Plantagenet. His example was followed by the nobility and people in general. The Butlers of Ormond, a few of the prelates, and the citizens of Waterford alone adhered to the cause of king Henry.

When these events reached the ears of Henry he summoned a great council of peers and prelates, and by their advice published a full pardon to all his former opponents ; for the preceding one had been so clogged with conditions, and had been violated in so many points, as to have failed of its great object. He then had the earl of Warwick led from the Tower to St. Paul's, and thence brought to the

palace of Shene, where the nobility and all others had daily opportunities of conversing with him. The king next (and this is a measure that has never been accounted for at all satisfactorily) seized the goods of the queen-dowager, and confined her in the convent of Bermondsey. The pretext assigned is, that she had put her daughters into the power of the late usurper; but surely if she did so to make her daughter a queen, it was not to be thence inferred that she would now engage in a plot to dethrone her!

The earl of Lincoln, whom Richard had declared heir to the throne, and whom Henry had treated with favour, now took the side of the pretender, and having established a correspondence with sir Thomas Broughton of Lancashire, went privately to the court of Margaret the duchess-dowager of Burgundy, who, as Bacon observes, "having the spirit of a man and the malice of a woman, abounding in treasure by the greatness of her dower and her provident government, and being childless and without any nearer care, made it her design and enterprise to see the majesty royal of England once again replaced in her house; and she bare such a mortal hatred to the house of Lancaster, and personally to the king, as that she was no ways mollified by the conjunction of the houses in her niece's marriage, but rather hated her niece as the means of the king's ascent to the crown and assurance therein." This may account for Margaret's readily engaging in the project; as for Lincoln, he may have hoped if the present king was overthrown to make good his title against the pretender, the real Warwick, and the daughters of king Edward.

Margaret having furnished Lincoln and lord Lovel with a body of two thousand German veterans, commanded by an able officer named Martin Schwartz, they sailed for Ireland (1487) and landed at Dublin. By the advice of Lincoln the impostor was crowned (May 24) as Edward VI. by the bishop of Meath, a crown for the occasion being taken from the statue of the Virgin; the new king was

then borne from the cathedral to the castle on the shoulders of a gigantic chieftain of English blood named Darcy. A parliament was summoned, and immediate preparations were made for invading England, and but ten days after (June 4) the troops of the pretender effected a landing at Furness in Lancashire, where being joined by the tenantry of sir Thomas Broughton, they pushed on for Yorkshire. The king meantime had assembled his troops at Kenilworth, whence he advanced to Nottingham; every day he was joined by additional troops, while Lincoln found all his efforts vain to rouse the partisans of the house of York. He resolved to make himself if possible master of the town of Newark, but the king got between him and that place, and at Stoke the two armies came in sight (16th). Urged by despair, though his troops did not exceed eight thousand men, Lincoln accepted the proffered combat. The battle lasted but three hours, and ended in the destruction of the rebels, one half of whom were slain. Most of their leaders perished; Lincoln, Schwartz, sir Thomas Broughton, the earl of Kildare, and his brother, Maurice Fitzgerald, remained dead on the field. Lord Lovel was seen to escape, but he was never seen or heard of after*. Simons and his pupil were taken prisoners; the former being made to confess the imposture, was thrown into prison, where he died; the latter was made a turnspit in the royal kitchen, and he was afterwards raised to the more important office of one of the king's falconers. Thus ended this strange insurrection.

The king, who always felt or affected great devotion,

* "Toward the close of the 17th century, at his seat at Minster-Lovel in Oxfordshire, was discovered a chamber under the ground, in which was the skeleton of a man seated in a chair, with his head reclined on a table. Hence it is supposed that the fugitive had found an asylum in this subterraneous chamber, where he was perhaps starved to death through neglect." (Lingard, from West's Furness, p. 210.) This incident has acquired additional interest from the use made of it in a romance, of which the scene is in the same neighbourhood.

caused a *Te Deum* to be sung at Lincoln, whither he proceeded after the battle; and he sent his banner to be offered to Our Lady of Walsingham, to whom he had made his vows. He then made a progress, or rather judicial circuit, through the North, where he punished the aiders and abettors of the rebels, in a few cases with death, in most by fines and ransoms, which mode was more congenial to his feelings as it brought money into his coffers. On his return to London, aware of the impolicy of having so long deferred the queen's coronation, he caused that ceremony to be performed with great magnificence. For this purpose, having been lodged according to custom in the Tower, she was conveyed on Saturday, November the 24th, to Westminster in a litter, over which four knights held a canopy of cloth of gold. She was attired in white cloth of gold damask, with a mantle of the same furred with ermine. "Her faire yelow haire," says our authority*, "hung downe pleyne byhynd her bak with a calle of pipes over it." Several other litters, and four baronesses mounted on grey palfreys, followed. On Sunday she was crowned, and she then dined in state in the hall. The lady Catherine Grey and mistress† Ditton went and sat at her feet under the table, and the countesses of Oxford and Rivers knelt at each side of her holding a kerchief at times before her. The king viewed the whole from behind a lattice.

Henry was now able to turn his attention to foreign affairs, and as the Scots were the people who could give him greatest annoyance, he took advantage of the friendly feeling which their king, James III., had toward him, to establish a truce for seven years between their respective kingdoms; to strengthen their amity, it was arranged that James, who was now a widower, should marry the queen-

* Leland, Coll. iv. 216., *seq. ap.* Lingard, v. 291.

† As we should now say Miss. Mistress was formerly the title of unmarried young ladies.

dowager, and his two sons two of her daughters*. This project, however, was frustrated, as the king of Scots was murdered the following year by his turbulent subjects. Henry renewed the truce with his son and successor.

The affairs of Brittany were at this time in a very ticklish condition. It was the only one of the great fiefs except Burgundy which had not been reunited to the crown of France; its duke was far advanced in years, and his only children were two daughters. The eldest, Anne, who was now in her thirteenth year, was sought in marriage by Maximilian king of the Romans, by the duke of Orleans, and by the lord d'Albret of Béarn. But the young king of France, Charles VIII., who, as being contracted to the daughter of Maximilian, could not seek the hand of Anne, was resolved to assert some ancient feudal claim and take possession of the duchy. Some time after the French troops entered Brittany; both sides applied to Henry; his parliament gave him funds and urged him to aid the duke; but though he took their money he heeded not their advice. The French arms still advanced (1488), and the duke was obliged to sign a treaty allowing Charles to retain his conquests, and binding himself not to marry either of his daughters without the consent of his superior lord. A few weeks after the duke and his youngest daughter both died; Charles then claimed the succession, and renewed the war, and he soon made himself master of one half of the duchy.


The English nation was eager to take the part of the persecuted princess. The parliament when summoned again freely granted supplies; "yet," says Bacon, "the subsidy granted bare a fruit that proved harsh and bitter. All was inned at last into the king's barn, but it was after a storm." The people of Durham and Yorkshire refused

* Rymer, xii. 329. This fact, first adverted to by Lingard (v. 293), seems to disprove completely the common notion that Henry treated his mother-in-law with great and unnecessary harshness.

to pay it; the collectors appealed to the earl of Northumberland, who wrote to court for instructions; the king wrote back that he would not abate a penny; the earl assembled the freeholders and delivered the harsh mandate in a harsh manner; the people became irritated, and attacking the earl's house slew himself and some of his servants. An insurrection now broke out headed by sir John Egremont and a low fellow named John à Chamber. The king sent troops against them under the earl of Surrey, whom he had pardoned and released from the Tower, and the insurgents were speedily routed. Egremont escaped to the duchess of Burgundy; Chamber was taken and executed at York.

A body of six thousand men, however, under lord Willoughby de Brook was sent to Brittany; but as they were forbidden to act on the offensive they proved of little use, and as soon as the six months of their service were expired they returned home. The duchess afterwards (1491) married Maximilian by proxy, but the king of France having gained over her counsellors, and supporting their arguments by the terror of his arms, forced her to rescind that contract and become his queen.

Henry seeing Brittany thus lost, resolved, since he could do nothing else, to make money of the affair. He summoned a parliament, and pretending great indignation declared (Oct. 17) his determination to make war on France; the parliament, always liberal on these occasions, readily granted two tenths and two fifteenths, and the king himself renewed the practice of extorting money under the title of benevolence. We are told of a dilemma used by the chancellor Morton on this occasion, and which some called his fork, others his crutch. He directed the commissioners, that "if they met with any that were sparing they should tell them that they must needs have because they laid up; and if they were spenders they must needs have because it was seen in their port and manner of



living." So, as the historian says, neither kind came amiss, and the king having thus gotten plenty of money at length landed at Calais (Oct. 2, 1492) with a force of sixteen hundred men-at-arms and twenty-five thousand foot, whence he advanced in a few days and laid siege to Boulogne. But this was all mere sham and pretence, for negotiations for peace were going on all the time; a treaty of peace and amity was finally concluded (Nov. 3), Charles engaging to pay, at the rate of 25,000 francs a year, the sum of 149,000*l.* in satisfaction of all claims on his queen, and of the arrears of the annuity due to Edward IV. Henry then returned to England; his counsellors, who had all gotten presents and pensions from Charles, praised his wisdom and policy; but his nobles, many of whom had sold or pledged their estates to furnish them for the war, were discontented, and said that "the king cared not to plume his nobility and people to feather himself."

The duchess of Burgundy was by the classic fancy of the age styled the king's Juno, as being to him what that goddess was to the 'pious Æneas.' She was unremitting in her hostility, and "at this time," says Bacon, "the king began again to be haunted with spirits by her magic and curious arts." For just as he had declared war against France a vessel from Portugal arrived (May 5) at Cork in Ireland, on board of which was a young man of engaging mien and aged about twenty years. A rumour soon spread that he was Richard duke of York, who had escaped from the Tower. The answers he made when questioned satisfied his credulous auditors. The citizens, induced by O'Water, their late mayor, declared for him; the earl of Desmond, the great southern chief, did the same; but the earl of Kildare, when applied to, returned an ambiguous answer. Ere the pretender advanced any further he received an invitation from Charles to repair to France, which he accepted, and on his arrival he was treated as the true heir to the English crown; a guard of honour

was assigned him, and the exiles, to the number of one hundred, offered him their services. Henry hurried on the peace, and Charles then ordered the pretender to quit his dominions, having now made the use of him he had proposed. He sought refuge with Margaret of Burgundy, by whom he was received with open arms; she styled him the 'White Rose of England,' and gave him a guard of thirty halberdiers. The English Yorkists, anxious to ascertain the truth, sent over sir Robert Clifford as their secret agent, and he reported that he was the real duke of York. The king also despatched his emissaries (1493) in order to find out who he really was, and the result of their inquiries is said to have been, that his name was Peterkin or Perkin (i. e. Little Peter) Osbeck or Warbeck, the son of a converted Jew of Tournay; that by frequenting the society of the English merchants in Flanders he had acquired their language and manners; that the lady Margaret had fixed upon him as a proper person to personate her nephew; and that fearing he would be suspected if he came direct from Flanders, she had sent him to Lisbon in the service of lady Brompton, the wife of one of the exiles. The king now required of the archduke Philip, the sovereign of Burgundy, to banish or surrender Warbeck; but he replied that he could not control the duchess in the lands of her dower. Henry in revenge withdrew the mart of English cloth from Antwerp, and forbade all intercourse between the two countries.

The gifts and promises of the king had gained Clifford, who communicated to him the names of the leading English Yorkists who were in correspondence with the partisans of the pretender; and on the same day (1494) the Lord Fitzwalter and several others were arrested on a charge of treason. Sentence of death was passed on them. Sir Simon Mountfort, sir Thomas Thwaites, and Robert Radcliffe were executed at once; Fitzwalter was imprisoned at Calais; the rest were pardoned. But a greater

victim was to fall. After celebrating his Christmas Henry removed his court to the Tower (Jan. 7, 1495), where Clifford was brought before him and received his pardon on his knees. Being required to reveal all he knew of the conspiracy, he named the lord chamberlain sir William Stanley, he who had saved the king's life at Bosworth. The king affected great horror, and refused to believe him; Clifford persisted, and Stanley when examined the next day actually confessed the charge. He was tried, condemned, and some time after beheaded; and as his personal property, much exceeding 40,000 marks, and his lands, yielding 3000*l.* a year "of old rent," says Bacon, "a great matter in those times," fell to the king, they were thought to have stood in the way of his pardon. It is however probable that he was really guilty of some words or acts inconsistent with perfect loyalty. The chief charge against him seems to have been his having said, "If I were sure that that young man were king Edward's son, I would never bear arms against him."

The pretender had now lain idle for three years, and the Flemings and the archduke were complaining of the losses which he caused them. He therefore found it necessary to make an effort, and while Henry was spending some time with his mother at Latham in Lancashire, he landed (July 3) a few hundred adventurers at Deal in Kent. But the people of the country rose and killed several of them, took one hundred and fifty prisoners, and drove the rest to their boats. The prisoners were led to London, "all railed in ropes, like a team of horses in cart," and by the king's order they were hanged there or on different parts of the coast. Perkin returned to the Netherlands, but the great treaty of commerce which was signed the next year between them and England having deprived him of his asylum there, he put to sea once more. He now (1496) sailed to Cork, but he found no countenance there, as Henry had secured the obedience of the Irish.

He therefore departed, and directed his course to Scotland, where having, it is said, presented to king James letters from the king of France and the lady Margaret, he was received with all due honour, and the king gave him in marriage the lady Catherine Gordon, daughter of the earl of Huntley, and a near relation of his own. In the winter (1497) the king assembled an army of borderers and invaded Northumberland; the adventurer, who had a body of about fourteen hundred English and other outlaws with him, issued a proclamation calling on his loyal subjects to arm in his cause, and enumerating the crimes of Henry Tudor, as he styled the king. But the English took no heed; the king of Scots then began to burn and waste the country, at which Perkin, it is said, was, or affected to be, greatly moved, declaring "that no crown was so dear to his mind as that he desired to purchase it with the blood and ruin of his country;" James, half in jest, made answer, "that he doubted much he was careful for that was none of his, and that he should be too good a steward for his enemy to save the country to his use."

The king used the pretext of this inroad to call a parliament and obtain a subsidy. The tax was paid in most places; but in Cornwall the people, excited by the harangues of one Michael Joseph, a blacksmith or farrier of Bodmin, and one Thomas Flammock, a prating lawyer, assembled in arms to the number of sixteen thousand men, and marched for London, to petition the king to punish the primate Morton and sir Reginald Grey, whom they regarded as the authors of this impost. At Wells they were joined by the lord Audley, whom they made their leader; they then advanced into Kent, and encamped on Blackheath, within view of London. The king, who had his troops assembled, prepared to give them battle. He divided his army into three parts, of which one, under the earl of Oxford, was to get in the rear of the hill on which the rebels were posted; the second, under D'Aubigny the

lord chamberlain, was to attack them in front; while the third, under himself in person, was to remain as a reserve in St. George's Fields. On Saturday, June 22nd, (the king's lucky day as he esteemed it,) the attack was made. The advance guard of the rebels defended Deptford-bridge at first stoutly, but they were driven back to their main body; D'Aubigny then gained the hill, and they scattered and fled in all directions. About two thousand of them were slain, and fifteen hundred taken, among which last were their three leaders. Lord Audley was beheaded; Flammoek and Joseph were hanged at Tyburn; all the rest were pardoned.

Meantime the king of Scots again poured his light troops over the borders, and scoured the country as far as the Tees; but on the approach of the earl of Surrey he retired, and soon after, under the mediation of the Spanish ambassador, a truce for seven years was concluded. The pretender then left Scotland, and having made another ineffectual attempt at Cork, sailed over to Whitsand bay, in Cornwall, whence he advanced to Bodmin and raised the banner of Richard IV. The Cornishmen to the number of three thousand repaired to him, and his army was doubled by the time he reached Exeter, to which town he laid siege. But the citizens defending themselves valiantly, and the nobility and gentry of the county coming to their aid, he retired, and led his men toward Taunton, at which place the royal army had now arrived. During the day (Sept. 20) he made all ready for battle with great alacrity; but about midnight he secretly departed with about sixty horse and took sanctuary at Bewdley, or Beaulieu, in the New Forest. The rebels next day finding themselves abandoned submitted, and were all pardoned except a few of the ringleaders. Some horsemen were sent to St. Michael's Mount to take the lady Catherine Gordon, who had been left there by her husband, "whom," says the historian, "in all fortunes she entirely loved, adding the

virtues of a wife to the virtues of her sex." When she was brought to the king he treated her with great kindness; he afterwards placed her about the queen, and assigned her an honourable pension. The name of the White Rose, originally "given to her husband's false title, was continued in common speech to her true beauty*."

A guard was placed round the sanctuary to prevent the escape of Perkin, and seeing that he had no hopes remaining he consented to leave it on promise of a pardon (Oct. 5). The king did not admit him into his presence, but he had his liberty, and on the return to London he rode in the royal suite. On the way multitudes flocked to gaze on him. When they came to London he was led on horseback through the city to the Tower and back to Westminster. He was ordered not to quit the precincts of the palace, and he was repeatedly examined about his history, and a portion of his confession was made public. After six months, being weary of restraint, he contrived to escape and made for the coast, but he was so closely pursued that he took sanctuary once more at the priory of Bethlehem at Shene. At the request of the prior the king granted him his life; but he was made to stand an entire day in the stocks at Westminster-hall, and the next day in Cheapside, and read aloud the confession which he had made and signed. He was then committed to the Tower (1498).

In the Tower Warbeck soon contrived to form an intimacy with the unhappy earl of Warwick. This ill-fated youth had spent nearly his whole life in prison merely because he happened to be a real Plantagenet. Being secluded from all society his faculties were never developed, and his ignorance was such, that, as the chronicler says, "he could not discern a goose from a capon." He gave in to the projects of the pretender for their escape; four

* She afterwards married a Welsh knight named Sir Matthew Craddock (Caradoc), and lies buried in the church of Swansea.

servants of the lieutenant, it is said, were gained, who were to murder their master and then convey the prisoners to a place of safety. But the plot was discovered in time; Perkin was then tried and convicted of treasons committed by him after his landing in the kingdom, and he was executed at Tyburn (Nov. 16), where he once more read his confession and averred its truth*. Warwick was arraigned before the house of peers for conspiring with Perkin to raise sedition and to destroy the king; the poor innocent youth pleaded guilty, and was beheaded on Tower-hill (Nov. 28).

Such was the end of the last male of the Plantagenets. His fate was lamented by the whole nation, and people did not hesitate to say that the late plot had been only a device of the king to have a pretext for destroying him; for he felt that as long as Warwick lived he had no chance of peace. Even this very year, a young man of Suffolk named Ralph Wilford, aided by one Patrick, a friar, had personated the young earl in Kent, and though they had no success, and the former was executed and the latter imprisoned for life, the attempt might be renewed. Those odious reasons of state which are held to justify every crime might therefore have induced the king to seize, if not make, the pretext for freeing himself from apprehension by shedding guiltless blood. But we are assured that it was not so much anxiety for his own safety as the desire of procuring a high alliance for his son that actuated Henry. He had been for some time in treaty with Ferdinand king of Aragon for a match between his eldest son and the infanta Catherine; and he caused, it is said, letters out of Spain to be shown at this time, in which Ferdinand had written to him "that he saw no hopes of his succession as long as the earl of Warwick lived; and that he was loath to send his daughter to troubles and dangers;" and many years after that princess on a sad occasion declared

* See Appendix (Y).

"that *she* had not offended, but it was a judgement of God for that her former marriage was made in blood*."

The king now had rest for the remainder of his reign. The state of almost constant hostility with Scotland was terminated (1503) by a marriage between the king of Scots and Henry's eldest daughter Margaret. When some of his council expressed their fears, that in case of the failure of the male line England might fall to the king of Scotland, the more sagacious monarch replied, "that if that should be, Scotland would be but an accession to England, for that the greater would draw the less." Time has verified the prediction.

The long-projected marriage between prince Arthur and the Spanish infanta took place (Nov. 14, 1501) as soon as the prince had passed his fifteenth year. There were splendid festivities on the occasion, and Ludlow in Shropshire was fixed on as the abode of the young couple. But their connubial felicity was destined to an early blight, for the amiable and accomplished prince fell sick and died in the spring of the following year (April 2). The king, as soon as he overcame his grief, which was great, began to think how he still might retain the Spanish connexion, and get the princess's portion, which was 200,000 crowns; and for this purpose, when it had become apparent that the late marriage had been fruitless†, it was arranged that his second son, Henry, who was now twelve years old, should espouse his brother's widow when he attained the age of fifteen. The primate Warham strongly objected to

* "Lord Bacon," says Mackintosh, "a witness against Henry above exception, positively affirms that the flagitious correspondence had been seen in England, and that it was shown by the king to excuse his assent to a deed of blood." Lingard, who would not willingly hear anything bad of Ferdinand the Catholic, speaks of it as a mere "report to remove the odium from the king." Cardinal Pole, however, Warwick's nephew, seems to have believed it, for his biographers Beccatelli and Dudith both assert it, and evidently on his authority.

† Henry was not given the title of Prince of Wales for some months after Arthur's death.

this course as contrary to the divine law, but his scruples were not regarded, and the necessary bull of dispensation was easily procured from pope Julius II.

The following year (1503) Henry lost his queen, who died in childbed in the Tower. As the dowager queen of Naples had been left an immense property by her husband, he had thoughts of seeking her hand; but when he learned that the reigning king refused to let the devise be executed, he laid his plan aside.

On the death of Isabel queen of Castile her crown devolved to her daughter Joanna, who was married to the archduke Philip. As the new king and queen were sailing from the Netherlands to Spain (1506) stress of weather drove them into Weymouth. As soon as Henry heard of their arrival he sent to invite them to his court at Windsor, where he detained them for three months; in which time he made Philip consent to a treaty of commerce more to the advantage of England than the former one, and also to his marriage with his sister the dowager duchess of Savoy. He moreover took advantage of the captivity, as we may term it, of the archduke to get into his power a man of whom he had his apprehensions. This was Edmund de la Pole, younger brother of the earl of Lincoln who was slain at Stoke. On the death of his father, the duke of Suffolk, Edmund claimed the title and estates, but Henry would only give him (and that as a boon) the title of earl and a small part of the property. When he afterwards had the misfortune to kill a man, in a fit of anger, the king granted him a pardon, but commanded him to plead it openly in the court of King's Bench. Suffolk's pride was wounded, and he retired to his aunt the duchess of Burgundy. Henry however induced him to return, and he was present at the marriage of prince Arthur; on which occasion the splendour of his equipages and other expenses involved him deeply in debt. Soon after he ran away again, and the king then suspecting a conspiracy, di-

rected sir Robert Curson, captain of the castle of Hammes, near Calais, to pretend to desert to him, and if possible to learn his secrets. On the information sent by Curson, the king arrested his own brother-in-law the earl of Devon, Suffolk's brother William, sir James Tyrrel, sir William Windham, and some others. The two first, against whom there was no charge but their kindred to Suffolk, were detained in prison; the two last were executed for having aided the king's enemy* (1502). This crushed the conspiracy, if there was one, and Suffolk was now living in penury in the archduke's dominions.

One day Henry drew the archduke into a private room, and laying his hand on his arm said, "Sir, you have been saved upon my coast, I hope you will not suffer me to wreck upon yours." Philip asked what he meant. "I mean it," said he, "by that same harebrain wild fellow, my subject, the earl of Suffolk, who is protected in your country, and begins to play the fool when all others are weary of it." "I had thought, sir," replied Philip, "your felicity had been above these thoughts; but if it trouble you I will banish him." "These hornets," said the king, "are best in their nests, and worst when they do fly abroad: my desire is to have him delivered to me." Philip mused, and said, "That can I not do with my honour, and less with yours; for you will be thought to have used me as a prisoner." "Then," cried Henry, "the matter is at an end; for I will take that dishonour upon me, and so your honour is saved." It was finally agreed that Suffolk should be induced to surrender, the king pledging himself not to touch his life. He came therefore, and was committed to the Tower, and Philip then departed.

The king's avarice naturally increased with his years, and he scrupled at no means of extorting money from his subjects. His chief agents were two able but unprincipled

* It was on this occasion that Tyrrel confessed the murder of the two princes in the Tower.



lawyers, Edmund Dudley and Richard Empson; the former a man of good family, the latter the son of a sieve-maker. These men (whom he made barons of the exchequer), by reviving dormant claims of the crown, by taking advantage of various ancient and nearly obsolete statutes, which had created numberless offences punishable by fine, etc., and other modes, and by encouraging a host of informers, drew large sums into the royal coffers, and at the same time enriched themselves enormously, while they shared with the king in being objects of the maledictions of all classes of the people.

If we may credit the following story, the king himself equaled his agents in the art of taking advantage of the letter of the law, without regard to good feeling or justice. He was one time entertained by the earl of Oxford, a man who had always been active and zealous in his cause. As he was departing from the castle, the earl's servants and retainers, dressed in his liveries, stood drawn up in two rows to do the monarch honour. "My lord," said the king, "I have heard much of your hospitality, but it is greater than the speech. These handsome gentlemen and yeomen that I see on each side of me are surely your menial servants." "That, may it please your grace," replied the earl, "were not for mine ease: they are most of them my retainers, come to do me service at a time like this, and chiefly to see your grace." Henry gave a start. "By my faith, my lord," said he, "I thank you for your good cheer, but I may not endure to have my laws broken in my sight. My attorney must speak with you." An act had been passed against this practice in the beginning of his reign, and the earl had to pay a fine of 10,000*l.* for having thus honoured his king.

Henry had been for some time subject to the gout; every year the attacks became more severe, and he was finally carried off by one of them (Apr. 22, 1509), in the fifty-third year of his age. On his death-bed he desired

his son to put the earl of Suffolk to death; he also, it is said, charged him not to marry his brother's widow. He forgave all offences against the crown except murder and felony, and directed that reparation should be made to all who had suffered by the injustice of his ministers. His remains were deposited in the splendid chapel founded by himself at Westminster Abbey, which still remains, a noble monument of the king's munificence, and of the taste and skill of our forefathers in the art of architecture.

Henry VII. was personally brave, but he was a lover of peace. He was sagacious and circumspect, could conceal his own designs and fathom those of others. He was by nature distrustful; he appears to have been nearly incapable of friendship or any strong attachment. His clemency to rebels on various occasions shows him not to have been of a cruel or sanguinary temper; while his murder of the earl of Warwick proves that he could even shed innocent blood out of policy. But the great blemish of his character was avarice; this low and groveling passion tinged all his acts, led him to commit numerous deeds of oppression, and caused him to leave the world laden with the maledictions of his people. From the charge of studied neglect of his queen we think he has been cleared*; he seems to have treated her with as much affection as it was in his nature to show to any woman, perhaps with as much as she deserved, when we consider her indecent haste to marry her uncle, the murderer of her brothers.

The two following important statutes were passed in this reign:

The statute of fines (4 Hen. VII.) was a re-enactment of one of Richard III. Its object was, by establishing a short term of prescription, to check suits for the recovery of lands; but it has been erroneously supposed to be the result of a deep-laid scheme of Henry for humbling the

* See Lingard, v. 327.



aristocracy, by enabling them to alienate their lands. The statute of entails, or *de donis* of Edward I., had been in reality already in a great measure rendered null by the legal artifice of suffering a recovery; and all that the present statute did was to enact that a fine, levied with proclamation in a court of justice, should after five years be a bar to all claims on lands.

The other statute (11 Hen. VII.) was one well adapted to those times in which the succession to the throne was so frequently disputed, and was intended to obviate, to a certain extent, the distinction between a government *de jure* and one *de facto*, which is of so mischievous a nature. It enacted that no one should be punished for doing true and faithful service to the king for the time being.

By another act (3 Hen. VII.) a court was appointed,—the germ of the future star-chamber. To check the practice of maintenance and other obstructions of justice, the chancellor, treasurer, keeper of the privy seal, or any two of them, with a bishop and a lay lord of the council, and the two chief justices, were empowered to call before them, and punish by fine and imprisonment, persons guilty of those offences.

The New World was discovered by Columbus while Henry VII. occupied the throne. The British monarch, anxious to share in the gain, commissioned Sebastian Cabot, a Venetian who was settled at Bristol, to fit out vessels for discovery and conquest in the lands beyond the western ocean. Cabot discovered (1497) the coast of North America, from Labrador to the gulf of Florida.

CHAPTER II.

HENRY VIII.*

1509—1526.

Execution of Empson and Dudley.—War with France;—with Scotland.—
 Battle of Flodden.—Wolsey.—The Field of the Cloth of Gold.—Execution
 of the duke of Buckingham.—Wolsey deceived by the Emperor.

THE new monarch was just eighteen years of age, handsome in person and popular in manners. The claims of the White and Red Roses were united in him, so that all chances of a disputed title were removed. The unpopularity of the late king, through his avarice, made men look with joyful anticipation to the reign of a young and gallant prince; and the treasures amassed by that avarice enabled him to fulfil these expectations.

Acting under the advice of his grandmother, the venerable countess of Richmond, Henry retained all his father's faithful and experienced ministers. His next care was to celebrate his marriage with the princess Catherine, which the crafty, interested policy of their fathers had hitherto held in suspense. The ceremony was performed two months after his accession (June 24); the joint coronation immediately succeeded, and for two years pleasure and amusement formed the sole occupation of the court of England. The king, who excelled in martial exercises, loved to display his address and vigour before his consort, her ladies, the nobility, and the foreign ambassadors; and he frequently fought at barriers, and gained the prize in their presence.

On the very day of his accession, to gratify the people,

* Authorities :—Polydore Virgil, Herbert, Hall, Stowe, and the other chroniclers.

Henry had ordered Empson, Dudley, and their chief agents or *promoters*, as they were termed, to be arrested. The latter were pilloried, and then led on horseback through the city, with their faces to the horses' tails, and finally imprisoned for different terms; the former were charged before the council with having usurped the authority of the courts of law, kept heirs out of their lands, etc. Empson made an ingenious and eloquent defence; and these charges not proving tenable, and it being resolved not to let them escape, an absurd one of a design to secure the person of the young king on the death of his father, and make themselves masters of the government, was brought against them. On this, which every one must have known to be false, juries readily found them guilty. They were respited however, and might perhaps have been suffered to linger out their lives in prison, but that the king was so harassed with complaints against them in his progress the following summer (1510), that he signed the warrant for their execution, and they suffered on Tower-hill.

Our restricted limits will on this and on future occasions prevent our entering into details on the affairs of the continent, in which England now began for the first time to take a part. A very slight sketch of them must therefore suffice at present. The great scene of political contention at this period was Italy, where the republics, with the exception of Venice and Genoa, had, after their brilliant but unquiet career, sunk under the despotism of petty princes. These little potentates, by their marriages and alliances with the transalpine royal houses, had caused them to have claims on various parts of Italy; thus Charles VIII. of France and Ferdinand of Aragon had had a pretext for making the conquest of Naples, from which the latter afterwards expelled the former; and Louis XII. of France had lately, in right of his mother, made himself master of the duchy of Milan. The emperor of Germany

had a claim of feudal superiority over the different Italian states; while the valiant and turbulent, yet perhaps patriotic pontiff, Julius II. sought only to extend the papal dominions, to humble the pride of the Venetians, and then to drive the *Barbarians* (as the Italians styled the transalpine nations) out of Italy. The League of Cambray (1508), in which the pope, the emperor, and the kings of France and Spain united against the Venetians, sufficed to humble their haughty aristocracy before the pontiff; but it gave occasion to hostilities between him and the king of France. Ferdinand, and at his desire his son-in-law of England, took the side of the pontiff, which party was also after some hesitation embraced by the emperor Maximilian.

Ferdinand, who never knew a generous sentiment, and thought only on his own interests, proposed to his son-in-law a joint invasion of Guienne, to which Henry now asserted his right. The Spanish monarch's real object however, as will appear, was the acquisition of the little kingdom of Navarre, which was held in right of his wife by John d'Albret, lord of Béarn, a vassal of the crown of France. It was agreed that Henry should send a force of six thousand five hundred men, Ferdinand one of nine thousand; while a fleet, to be furnished in equal proportions, should keep the sea. Accordingly in the month of June 1512 the marquess of Dorset landed with the English army in Guipuscoa; while a fleet under the lord admiral Sir Edward Howard, cruized all the summer in the Bay of Biscay. Dorset proposed marching at once against Bayonne, but Ferdinand pretended that it was not safe to leave Navarre in their rear. A joint embassy was then sent to the king of Navarre to demand his neutrality; to this he agreed, but Ferdinand affecting to distrust him required the surrender of his fortresses. This being refused, the duke of Alva entered Navarre, and laid siege to Pampeluna, its capital, which was speedily reduced. The whole kingdom then submitted, and the king was obliged to seek a refuge

in France. The Spanish general then called on Dorset to join in the invasion of Guienne; but the latter was now grown mistrustful; his troops were suffering from disease, a spirit of mutiny had spread among them, and they demanded to be sent home; and though, at the desire of the Spanish envoy Windsor herald was sent out with orders for them to remain, they obliged their leaders to embark, and they landed at Portsmouth in December. Henry was at first greatly displeased, but he was at length satisfied with the explanations of the marquess.

While the army was lying thus inactive in Spain, sir Edward Howard made frequent descents on the coast of Brittany. At length (Aug. 12) he fell in with the French fleet of twenty sail, commanded by admiral Primauguet. Sir Charles Brandon, without waiting for orders, bore down on the admiral's ship, the Cordelier of Brest. As this last was of great size, carrying a crew of sixteen hundred men, her fire quickly dismasted the English vessel, to whose aid sir Thomas Knyvett hastened with the Regent, the largest ship in the English navy. The combat had lasted more than an hour, when another vessel came to the aid of Knyvett; Primauguet then, to save the honour of his flag, set fire to the Cordelier; the flames spread to the Regent, and both were consumed, and all on board of them perished. The rest of the French fleet escaped into Brest. Sir Edward Howard then made a vow never to see the face of the king till he had avenged the death of sir Thomas Knyvett. A still larger ship, named the Henry Grace Dieu was built to replace the Regent. The following year, (Apr. 25, 1513) sir Edward Howard, (whose maxim was that a seaman should be brave even to madness, to be good for anything) while blockading Brest, attempted, with two galleys and four boats, to cut out a squadron of six galleys, moored in a bay between rocks planted with cannon. Followed by no more than eighteen men, he leaped aboard the largest vessel; but his own galley chancing to fall

astern, he and his companions were left alone, and the crew with their pikes pushed them overboard, where they were drowned. The English fleet retired, and the French in return insulted the coast of Sussex, till sir Thomas Howard, who succeeded his brother, chased them into Brest.

The king had now assembled a gallant army of twenty-five thousand men for the invasion of France. Two divisions sailed under the earl of Shrewsbury and the lord Herbert; Henry himself followed (June 30) with the third, leaving the queen "rectrix and governor of the realm," and having previously given orders for the execution of the earl of Suffolk, who lay in the Tower. We have seen that the late king had enjoined him to rid himself of him if he would be safe: and as Suffolk's brother had been so imprudent as to take a command in the French army, and assume the title of the White Rose, the wrath of the king may have been thus excited against the unhappy prisoner. The envoys at foreign courts were instructed to declare that a traitorous correspondence between the brothers had been discovered.

The king loitered for some weeks at Calais, spending his time in festivity, while his generals invested the city of Terouenne. At length (Aug. 4) he entered the camp, where he was joined by the emperor Maximilian with four thousand horse; and this monarch, so high in dignity, to flatter the vanity of his young ally, styled himself his volunteer, wore the red rose and St. George's cross, and accepted one hundred crowns a day as his pay. The French king had, on his part, advanced as far as Amiens for the relief of Terouenne. He mustered his cavalry, renowned in the wars of Italy, at Blangi (Aug. 16), and it advanced in two divisions on the opposite banks of the river Lis. Maximilian led out his German horse and the English mounted archers, while Henry followed with the infantry. A sudden panic seized the French; they turned, though

greatly superior in numbers, and fled without striking a blow, leaving prisoners in the hands of the enemy their commander the duke de Longueville, Bussi d'Amboise, the chevalier Bayard, Clermont, La Fayette, and several other men of distinction. This rout was named the battle of Guinegate, from the place, but more usually that of Spurs, as the French made more use of their spurs than of their swords. Terouenne now surrendered, and the English army then advanced and laid siege to Tournai, which opened its gates on the eighth day (Sept. 29); and Henry, having devoted some days to festivity, returned to England for the winter.

Though the king of Scotland was Henry's brother-in-law, he shared, to the misfortune of himself and kingdom, in the war against him. The union between the two British sovereigns had never been cordial: James had in vain demanded the jewels left by will to his queen by her late father; to as little purpose had he required that the bastard Heron of Ford should be tried for the murder of sir Robert Ker, warden of the Scottish marches; and, with far less justice, he insisted on satisfaction for the death of Andrew Barton. For having granted letters of reprisal against the Portuguese to three brothers of this name, they took not merely Portuguese but English ships, under pretence of their carrying Portuguese property. On the repeated complaints of his subjects, Henry pronounced the Bartons pirates, and two of their ships were captured in the Downs; on which occasion Andrew Barton received a wound of which he died. To James' demand of satisfaction, Henry scornfully replied, that the fate of a pirate was beneath the notice of kings, and that the matter might be settled by commissioners on the borders. When Henry joined in the league against Louis, the latter sought earnestly to gain the Scottish king, to whom he sent many large sums of money; while his queen, Anne of Brittany, named James her knight, and sent him a ring from her own finger. The English

envoys, on the other hand, required him to remain neuter. Much diplomatic finesse, seasoned with the usual proportion of falsehood and insincerity, was employed on all sides; but when James found that the English had actually invaded France, he summoned his vassals to meet him at the Burrowmoor, and sent his fleet with a force of three thousand men to the aid of Louis. At the head of a numerous army the king of Scotland then crossed the Tweed (Aug. 22) near its confluence with the Till, and turning northwards laid siege to the castle of Norham, which held out for six days against him; it then surrendered, and its example was followed by the castles of Wark, Etall, and Ford. The Scots crossed the Till, and encamped (Sept. 6) on the hill of Flodden, the last of the Cheviot range, bordering on the dale of the Tweed.

The earl of Surrey, to whom Henry had committed the Scottish war, was at Pontefract when James crossed the Tweed: he had summoned the gentry of the north to meet him at Newcastle, and when they repaired to his standard his forces amounted to twenty-six thousand men. He then advanced at their head (Sept. 7) to Wooler-haugh, within five miles of the enemy. When he saw their position, fortified by nature on all sides but one, and that defended by cannon, he feared to attack, and, sending a herald to James, required him to descend into the plain, and engage on equal terms. The monarch refused. Surrey then, by the advice of his son, the lord-admiral, resolved to march toward Scotland, and then return and take the army in the rear. The English therefore crossed the Till, in two divisions, a van- and rearguard, the former led by the admiral, the latter by Surrey in person, and marched till evening up its right bank. At sunrise next morning (Sept. 9) they crossed it by the bridge of Twissel, and going down the left bank approached the Scottish camp. James, who now saw their object, ordered his men to fire their huts and retire to the hill of Brankston, more to the north. The smoke filled the




entire valley, and when it cleared away the vanguard of the English found themselves at the foot of the hill, on which the Scots were posted in five solid masses. They halted till the rearguard came up, and both then advanced in one line; the Scots meantime began to descend in good order and perfect silence.

The right wing of the English vanguard was assailed by a body of Scottish spearmen under the lord Home. It gave way, and its leader lord Edmund Howard was unhorsed, and lay on the ground expecting to be slain or taken, when the bastard Heron came with a body of outlaws and restored the battle; and the lord Dacre, with a reserve of fifteen hundred men, took the Scots in the rear and put them to flight. A body of seven thousand Scots under the earls of Huntley, Errol, and Crawford, was meantime hotly engaged with the remainder of the English vanguard, till, after an obstinate and bloody conflict, Errol and Crawford fell, and their men broke and fled. The king in person, followed by a numerous body of gallant warriors cased in armour, assailed the rearguard, and bearing down all resistance had nearly reached the royal standard, when sir Edward Stanley, who had defeated and chased over the hill the earls of Lennox and Argyle who were opposed to him, returned and took the body led by the king in the rear. James was slain by an unknown hand within a spear's length of Surrey. The battle, which began after four in the evening, lasted but an hour. The approach of night and the want of cavalry caused the pursuit not to exceed four miles. The loss of the Scots was ten thousand men, among whom were their king, his natural son the archbishop of St. Andrews, two bishops, two abbots, twelve earls, thirteen barons, and fifty gentlemen of distinction. The body of the Scottish king was conveyed to London to be there interred. To reward the victors Surrey was created duke of Norfolk; his son, earl of Surrey; Brandon lord Lisle, duke of Suffolk; lord Herbert,

earl of Somerset; and sir Edward Stanley, lord Mount-eagle.

When the Scots had recovered a little from the consternation caused by this calamitous defeat, they proceeded to regulate the affairs of the realm. The queen was allowed to retain the regency as guardian to her infant son James V.; but when shortly after the birth of her second son, of whom she had been left pregnant, she gave her hand to the earl of Angus, a young nobleman who had little but his personal beauty to recommend him, the regency was transferred to the duke of Albany. A deputation was sent to France, where he resided, to invite him over; and though Henry obtained from the French government a solemn promise that he should not be permitted to depart, he made his way to Scotland (1515) and assumed the royal authority. When he learned that Henry was tampering with the queen to bring her children to England, he besieged her in the castle of Stirling, and forced her to surrender the two princes.

To return to continental affairs. While Henry during the winter was making every preparation for renewing the war with vigour in the spring, Louis was no less strenuous in his exertions to procure a general peace (1514). The present pontiff Leo X., a lover of pleasure rather than of war, was easily propitiated; the permission to retain Navarre rapidly infused pacific notions into the mind of Ferdinand; and even Maximilian listened readily to a proposal for the marriage of a daughter of Louis, with Milan for her portion, to his grandson Charles, though this prince was already engaged to the princess Mary, sister of the king of England. Louis lost no time in making Henry aware of this arrangement, which at first he could hardly credit. When he could no longer doubt of it he began to lend an ear to proposals for peace, and Louis' queen happening to die at this time he offered his hand to Henry's sister Mary. Though Louis was fifty-three years old and the princess



but sixteen, and her affections moreover were engaged to the accomplished duke of Suffolk, she was induced to give her consent. The marriage was celebrated by proxy at Greenwich and at Paris. The young queen was then conducted to Abbeville by the duke of Norfolk, where Louis met her, and the ceremony was renewed in the cathedral (Oct. 9). Next day, to the grief and surprise of the bride, all her English attendants, except Norfolk's niece Anne Boleyn, a child but seven years old, and two others, were ordered home. Louis then conducted her to St. Denis, where she was crowned. The amorous monarch was enraptured with the charms of his youthful bride; but his constitution had been enfeebled, the change in his habits and mode of life was more than he could bear, and in less than three months (Jan. 1, 1515) the bride became a widow.

Louis was succeeded by Francis count of Angoulême, the next male heir. The new monarch was naturally anxious that Mary should not espouse the archduke Charles. As Suffolk was at the head of the embassy sent by Henry to convey her back to England, Francis, who knew of his love, urged him to seek her hand at once; and Mary herself gave him a challenge which few men could refuse, by asking him if he had now the courage to marry her at once, and fixing the day by which he must resolve to marry her or lose her for ever. Suffolk accepted the challenge; they were privately married in the month of March; Francis communicated the affair to Henry, interceding for the lovers; and Mary wrote taking the whole blame on herself. Henry was, or affected to be, extremely angry, but at length he relented and forgave them. Perhaps he was aware of the whole from the very commencement, as Suffolk had written to the favourite Wolsey in order to sound the king's disposition*. Indeed from his fixing on Suffolk to


* On a subsequent occasion Wolsey told Suffolk that if it had not been for him he would have lost his head.

convey his sister to England, and from the whole progress of the affair, it is not unlikely that Henry, who was far from being devoid of generosity, may have secretly wished to promote the union of the lovers, whom he ever after treated with the greatest affection.

It was about this time that the great power and influence of Wolsey attained its height, and during fifteen years he ruled the kingdom with a power nearly dictatorial. We will therefore sketch his history and character.

Thomas Wolsey, the son, as was said, of a butcher at Ipswich, having received a learned education entered the church. He became tutor in the family of the marquess of Dorset, who, pleased with his talents, recommended him to Henry VII., by whom he was made one of the royal chaplains. The king employed him in a secret negotiation respecting his marriage with Margaret of Savoy, and was so pleased with his conduct in it that he bestowed on him the deanery of Lincoln*. Soon after the accession of Henry VIII. Wolsey was made almoner, a situation which brought him in constant intercourse with the king; and the polish and gaiety of the almoner's manners, and the readiness with which, though in orders and nearly forty years of age, he entered into the royal pleasures,—even, it is said, singing, dancing, and carousing with the youthful courtiers,—quickly won him the heart of Henry, who was also aware of his talents for business and delighted with his skill in the theology of the schools. Preferments rapidly flowed in upon him. On the taking of Tournai he was made bishop of that see; he then became dean of York, then bishop of Lincoln, and finally archbishop of York, within the one year (1514). He was now courted by foreign princes, and even the pope, to secure his influence, sent

* Wolsey used such extraordinary despatch, and was so favoured by circumstances, that, quitting the king at Richmond at noon, he went to Brussels, arranged all matters with the emperor, and was back at Richmond by the night of the third day. (Cavendish's *Life of Wolsey*, pp. 10–14.)



him a cardinal's hat (1515); and the same year, on the resignation of archbishop Warham, the king conferred on him the office of chancellor. The pontiff finally (1518) invested him with the dignity of papal legate, and his ambitious mind now aspired even to the papacy itself.


The wealth of Wolsey was enormous. Beside his archbishoprick he farmed the revenues of the sees of Hereford and Worcester, which were held by foreigners; he held in *commendam* the abbey of St. Alban's and the see of Bath, which he afterwards exchanged for that of Durham, and this again for the more wealthy see of Winchester. His legatine court and the chancery brought him in large emoluments, and he had pensions from the pope, the emperor, and the king of France. Bound to celibacy by his order, profuse and vain by nature, he hoarded not his wealth; he lived in a style of princely magnificence, and barons and knights were among the officers of his household; palaces, abbeys, colleges, rose or were enlarged from his munificence; the learned men of all countries tasted of his bounty. At the same time in his office of chancellor he was just and upright, and his improvements in the administration of justice entitled him to the gratitude of the people.

England was now in tranquillity both externally and internally. The king of France had recovered the Milanese; and on the death of the emperor Maximilian (1519) he and Henry, and the late emperor's grandson Charles, who had already succeeded his maternal grandsire, Ferdinand, in his dominion over Spain, Naples, and the New World, became candidates for the vacant dignity. The contest in reality lay between Francis and Charles, and the decision of the electors in favour of the latter laid the foundation of a lasting enmity between the two monarchs. Each was solicitous to gain to his side the king of England and his powerful favourite. Francis, in reliance on his own address and powers of persuasion, eagerly desired a personal interview; he therefore (1520) summoned Henry to per-

form an article in the last treaty between them, by which it was stipulated that they should meet in person on the borders of their dominions. Henry, acting under the influence of the Spanish cabinet, sought to evade compliance; but Francis was too adroit for him, and the arrangement being committed by both monarchs to Wolsey, he appointed an interview to take place on the last day of May between Ardres and Guisnes, within the English territory; on which occasion a tournament should be held, in which the kings of France and England, each with eighteen companions, should answer all opponents at tilt, tourney, and barriers.

Henry and his court set out for Calais (May 21). On reaching Canterbury he learned that the emperor with a squadron of ships had cast anchor at Hythe: for Charles, in consequence (as he pretended) of most urgent affairs, being on his way from Spain to the Netherlands, and hearing as he came up the channel that the English court was so near the coast, could not, he said, omit the opportunity of paying his respects to his uncle and aunt. He came to court and remained for four days, during which short time he completely gained the affections of Henry, and he also secured the interest of Wolsey by assurances of the papacy on the next vacancy. On the very day of his departure (31st) the king and court of England passed over to Calais.

A temporary palace of frame-work, which had been sent out from England, had been erected near the castle of Guisnes. It contained a stately chapel and numerous apartments, whose walls were hung with tapestry and the ceilings covered with silk. A similar edifice had been erected for Francis near the town of Ardres. When the two monarchs had arrived at their respective pavilions Wolsey visited Francis, and an additional treaty for the marriage of the dauphin with Henry's only child Mary was concluded, Francis binding the crown of France to the payment of one hundred thousand crowns a-year to that



of England in case of their issue being seated on the English throne. When this arrangement had been made, the two monarchs rode (June 7) to the vale of Andern, within the territory of Guisnes; and while their attendants halted on the opposite eminences they rode down into the valley, met and embraced, and then walked arm in arm into a pavilion which had been prepared for their reception, where they held a secret conference on the late treaty.

Serious business being now at an end, the martial exercises began. During six days the kings tilted with spears against all comers; the tourney with the broad-sword on horseback occupied two more, and on the concluding day they fought on foot at barriers. The queens and their ladies looked on from their galleries and awarded the prizes; and whether it were owing to their own superior skill and prowess, or to the flattering courtesy of their opponents, the monarchs were invariably the winners. The heralds duly registered the names, arms, and feats of the knights. The French and English nobles, like their sovereigns, vied with each other in the display of magnificence on the Field of the Cloth of Gold, as the place of meeting was romantically styled; and debts were incurred which the frugality of a whole life proved in many cases unable to clear off*.

Yet, amidst all the gaiety and courtesy of the tournament, mutual distrust still prevailed. The number of guards and attendants on both sides was duly counted; when the kings would visit the respective queens, each set forth at the signal of the discharge of a culverin; they passed each other in the middle spot, and when Henry entered the French Francis entered the English territory. At length Francis, open and generous by nature, grew disgusted with these precautions; mounting his horse he rode one morning with but three attendants to Guisnes, and entering the chamber where Henry was a-bed, told


* "Many," says Bellay, "carried on their shoulders their mills, their forests, and their meadows."

him he was his prisoner. Henry rose and embraced him, and Francis, saying he should have no valet but himself, aided him to dress. Next day Henry returned the compliment, yet, still dubious of treachery, he always disguised himself and his attendants on his return from Ardres. On the last day (June 24), when Francis was on his return from taking leave of queen Catherine, he met a body of maskers; Henry, who was one of them, discovered himself, and flung a collar of pearls, worth 15,000 angels, round the neck of Francis, who in return presented him with a costly bracelet. They then embraced, and bade each other farewell.

So ended this memorable but useless interview. Useless, for Henry forthwith visited the emperor at Gravelines, and any impression made by the more generous Francis was quickly effaced by the arts of his young but calculating rival, who made Wolsey more than ever his own by renewed assurances of the papacy, and by immediate possession of the revenues of three Spanish bishopricks. Charles having conducted his uncle back to Calais, and spent three days with him there, returned to his own dominions.

The following year (1521) an event occurred in England which cast the first stain on the hitherto sufficiently blameless administration of Henry. Thomas Stafford duke of Buckingham, son of him who was put to death by Richard III., was one of the wealthiest subjects in England; he was moreover of the blood-royal, and held the great office of lord high constable. It is said that he incurred the enmity of Wolsey by complaining of the great expense caused by the interview at Guisnes, and by laying the blame on the cardinal. He had certainly excited the king's suspicions and jealousy by his imprudence.

Buckingham, possessed with the usual folly of desiring to pry into futurity, had formed an intimacy with one Hopkins, a Carthusian friar, who pretended to the gift of prophecy; and the lucky guesses of this man on one or




two occasions had confirmed the duke in his belief in his skill. Hopkins at times darkly intimated that Henry would leave no issue, and that great things were portended for Buckingham's son. What the effect of these hints may have been on the mind of the duke cannot be said positively, but he augmented his household, and sir William Bulmer, among others, quitted the king's to enter his service. For this offence Bulmer was brought before the star-chamber just before the king went to France, and Henry on pardoning him used very enigmatic language respecting Buckingham. Some time after the duke discharged a relation of his own named Knevett, whom he had made his steward; and this man out of revenge went to Wolsey and revealed all he knew, with additions, as usual, of the projects of Buckingham. The duke was summoned to court from his seat in Gloucestershire. On his way he observed that he was closely followed by three knights; at Windsor he met with insult; at York-place the cardinal refused to see him; and as he proceeded down the river in his barge to Greenwich he was arrested and conveyed to the Tower. He was soon after arraigned for high treason before the duke of Norfolk, lord high steward, and a jury of twenty-one peers. Knevett, Hopkins, and his confessor and chancellor, were examined as witnesses against him. He defended himself with eloquence and spirit; all the charges made against him did not amount to an overt act of treason, yet he was found guilty. The duke of Norfolk with tears pronounced his sentence; he replied with dignity, declaring his forgiveness of them and his resolution not to sue for mercy. He suffered on Tower-hill (May 17), amidst the lamentations of the people, who vented their rage on Wolsey, the supposed author of his death, by crying out "The butcher's son!"

Meanwhile the war had been renewed between Charles and Francis. Both parties however accepted the mediation of the king of England, and Wolsey being appointed

arbitrator, repaired to Calais to try to effect a peace. His commission however ended, as perhaps it was intended to do, in a league between the pope, the emperor, and the king of England, against France. Henry's daughter the princess Mary was engaged to the emperor, and the allies were simultaneously to invade France the following spring. The vacancy of the papal throne, by the sudden death of Leo (Dec. 1), raised Wolsey's hopes to their height; his own sovereign favoured his aspirations; the emperor was bound to him by obligations and promises; he possessed in abundance that which was omnipotent at Rome—money; yet the duplicity of the emperor, the jealousy of the French cardinals, or the arts of the cardinal Julio de' Medici, foiled his projects, and the choice of the sacred college fell upon Adrian of Utrecht, the emperor's tutor. As however the new pontiff was advanced in years, Wolsey readily listened to the excuses and the renewed promises of Charles, who on his way back to Spain landed at Dover (May 25, 1522,) and passed five weeks at the English court.

As the invasion of France had been arranged at this interview, the earl of Surrey passed over in the autumn to Calais with twelve thousand men of paid troops and four thousand volunteers, and being joined by one thousand German and Spanish horse made an inroad into the French territory (Aug. 31). He wasted and plundered the country as far as Amiens; but as the French would as usual give no opportunity of fighting, and a dysentery broke out among his troops, he was obliged to lead them back to Calais (Oct. 16.). The Scottish regent meantime, at the impulse of Francis, as the truce was expired, assembled an army of eighty thousand men for the invasion of England; but, deceived and terrified by the vaunts of lord Dacre, warden of the western marches, who menaced him with an army which actually did not exist, he disbanded his forces, glad to obtain a month's respite from war. The following year (1523) Surrey entered Scotland and burned the town



of Jedburgh; the regent assembled a force of sixty thousand men on the Burrow-moor, and soon after formed the siege of Wark (Nov. 1). Surrey, whose forces had been increased from nine to fifty thousand, advanced to give him battle, but the Scottish army decamped at midnight and recrossed the borders. Albany soon after left Scotland, never to return; the scandalous familiarity of queen Margaret with the son of lord Evandale alienated her friends; her husband, the earl of Angus, assumed the regency under the protection of Henry, and for eighteen years tranquillity prevailed on the borders.

Again was Wolsey doomed to meet with disappointment in his suit for the papacy. On the death of Adrian (Sept. 14) Henry called on Charles to perform his engagements to the cardinal; the English minister at Rome was directed to spare neither money nor promises; some members of the sacred college were gained, but the same causes operated against him as before, and by one of the manoeuvres familiar to the conclave the election fell on Julio de' Medici, the nephew of Leo X., who took the name of Clement VII. Wolsey was at length fully convinced of the insincerity of the emperor, for the papal throne was now occupied by a man much younger than himself. Dismissing, therefore, all his dreams of ambition, he began to think of the true interests of England; secret negotiations were entered into with the king of France, and when the defeat at Pavia (1525) had placed that monarch a captive in the hands of the emperor, Henry hastened to conclude an alliance offensive and defensive between the crowns of France and England. The following year (1526) the match between the emperor and the princess of Wales was broken off, and a marriage between her and Francis himself, or his son the duke of Orleans, was proposed. His domestic affairs, however, now began to occupy the attention of Henry, and as they were productive of most important results we must devote ourselves for some time to them exclusively.

It is perhaps at this point that modern history properly commences. The different European states had now assumed their permanent form, in which they were to enter into more intimate relations of war and peace than under the loose and unsteady political combinations of the middle ages. It was also precisely at this time that the great religious schism commenced, which for the space of more than a century was to give a religious character to wars which fanaticism, ambition, and policy combined to kindle.

In France the various great fiefs, such as Burgundy and Brittany, had been in sundry ways re-united to the crown, and the French monarch ruled with absolute dominion from the British channel to the Mediterranean and the Pyrenees. The Spanish peninsula (with the exception of Portugal) now also obeyed one head; for the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabel had united the crowns of Aragon and Castille, and their arms had reduced the Moorish kingdom of Grenada in the south, and the small independent state of Navarre in the north of the peninsula. Ferdinand had also acquired the kingdom of Naples in Italy. The conquest of the empires of Mexico and Peru in the New World, and the mines of the precious metals there discovered, had greatly augmented the power of Spain. Its present monarch was also sovereign of the wealthy and industrious provinces of the Netherlands in right of his father, and the votes of the German electors had placed him at the head of the Empire. No monarch since Charlemagne had ruled over such extensive dominions.

England, the next state in importance, had not yet attained her full measure of strength. Though secured against sudden invasion by her insular position, she had in Scotland a domestic foe always influenced by France; and her dominion over the barbarous natives of Ireland and her little less barbarous colonists in that island, was scarcely more than nominal.

The states of Italy under the rule of their petty tyrants

had sunk into insignificance. Naples had been conquered by Spain, and Venice had already begun to decline, in consequence of the new route to the East Indies discovered by the Portuguese, and the consequent diversion to the port of Lisbon of the greater part of the lucrative traffic of which Venice had long enjoyed the monopoly. At this time also the Ottoman empire, by the conquest of Syria and Egypt, nearly acquired its greatest extent. The northern kingdoms and Poland did not yet enter into the European system; Russia remained apart in Asiatic barbarism.

The press, that mighty power for good or evil, was now in active operation. Toward the middle of the last century the art of printing had been discovered in Germany; many of the classics of Greece and Rome had by means of it been made accessible to greater numbers of readers, and it presented men with a more ready mode of communicating their ideas. While classical literature flourished in Italy, theology was more cultivated north of the Alps, and the Reformation which had long been in progress at length broke forth with resistless force, and a considerable portion of the vassals of Rome flung off their mental chains, and rushed into the enjoyment of spiritual liberty. That all was pure, noble and blameless in this great revolution, no man will assert who knows what human nature is; but in great political and religious changes all that should rationally be expected is, that the good attained should outweigh the evil necessarily introduced in its train; and that the new condition of things should tend more to the production of social happiness than that which had preceded it. The Reformation, tried by this equitable standard, will, we venture to assert, be found eminently conducive to the melioration and social advancement of the human race, and is therefore justly to be numbered among the most important and glorious events which history records.

APPENDIX.





APPENDIX.

A, page 1.

AUTHORITIES.

THE history of Britain under the Romans is derived from Cæsar, Suetonius, Tacitus, Dion Cassius, and the other historians of the first five centuries of the Christian æra. In Hume's, Lingard's, and the other large histories, the particular references will be found. Early in the eleventh century of the Christian æra, a history, said to be founded on documents in the British language, was written by a monk named Geoffrey of Monmouth. It is a mere collection of fables, and is of no authority whatever.

For the subsequent history the following are the principal sources.

Gildas, a British prince, wrote in the sixth century; his remains are idle lamentations, with hardly any historic notices. The brief notices of Nennius, a monk of Bangor, come down to the year 625.

The ecclesiastical history of Venerable Bede, a monk of Wearmouth, in Northumbria, and the best writer of his age in Europe, relates the most important events from the landing of the Saxons in 449 to 734.

The following, mostly monks, in various monasteries, compiled histories, chronicles, etc., usually from some early period down to their own times. In the latter part of their works they are, therefore, to be regarded as contemporary authorities. Some commence at the Creation, others adopt the fables of Geoffrey of Monmouth: in the following list of them we will take the landing of the Saxons as the earliest date, regarding all that may precede it in their chronicles as forming no part of English history.

The Saxon Chronicle of the Abbey of Peterborough	}	449 to 1153
extends from		
William, a monk of Malmesbury, from	—	1143
Henry, a monk of Huntingdon	—	1154
Florence, a monk of Worcester, and his continuator	}	— 1154
of the same name and place		
Alured or Alfred, a monk of Beverley	—	1154
John of Wallingford, a monk of St. Albans, then	}	— 1258
prior of Wallingford, and finally abbot of St.		
Albans, and his continuator		
Ranulf Higden, a monk of St. Werburgh's at Chester	—	1066

Matthew, a monk of Westminster	449 to 1307
T. Otterburne, a Franciscan friar	— - 1413
J. Bromton, abbot of Jorvaulx in Yorkshire	588 - 1198
Simeon, a monk of Durham	700 - 1130
Roger Hoveden	732 - 1202
Chronicle of Mailros	735 - 1272
Henry Knighton, monk of Leicester	950 - 1395
Annals of Burton Abbey	1004 - 1263
— Margan Abbey	1066 - 1232
— Waverley Abbey	— - 1291
William, monk of Newbury or Newbridge in York- shire	} — - 1197
Matthew Paris and his continuator Rishanger, both monks of St. Albans	} — - 1273
Walter Hemingford or Hemingburgh, monk of Gisleburgh in Yorkshire	} — - 1300
T. Wikes, monk of Oseney	— - 1304
Gervasius, a monk of Canterbury	1122 - 1199
Radulf de Diceto, dean of St. Paul's, London	589 - 1199
M. Trivet, principal of the Dominicans at London.	1136 - 1307
T. Walsingham, monk of St. Albans	1273 - 1422
Adam Murimuth, canon of St. Paul's, London	1302 - 1343
J. Whethamstede, abbot of St. Albans	1441 - 1461
J. Rossus or Rous, a priest at Guyscliffe in War- wickshire	} 449 - 1485
W. Wyrcestre or Botoner, a gentleman	1426 - 1491

The histories of the abbeys of Canterbury, Croyland, Ely and Ramsey also furnish many circumstances. That of Canterbury by W. Thorn extends from its foundation to 1375; that of Croyland by Ingulf and his continuators from 626 to 1486; that of Ely from Edgar to the Conquest; and that of Ramsey from Athelstan to the Conquest.

The rime-chronicle of Robert of Gloucester extends from the earliest times to the end of Henry III.; that of Peter Langtoft to the end of Edward I.; and that of Harding to the accession of Edward IV.

The prose chronicle of Fabyan ends with Henry VIII.; Halle's extends from the accession of Henry IV. to the end of Henry VIII.; Grafton's from the accession of Richard I. to that of Elizabeth; Holingshed, Speed and Stow narrate the events from the earliest times to 1586, 1605 and 1631 respectively.

To these are to be added More's and Buck's histories of Edward V. and Richard III.; Bacon's of Henry VII.; and Herbert's of Henry VIII. Polydore Virgil, an Italian agent of the Holy See in England in the time of Henry VII. and VIII. wrote a narrative of English affairs in their reigns.

Exclusive of the biographies of saints, as those of Dunstan by Eadmer

and Osberne, and that of Becket by Stephanides or Fitz-Stephen, there are lives of particular kings, such as that of Alfred by Asser bishop of Sherborne; that of Edward the Confessor by Ethelred, abbot of Revesby (*Rivallis*), in Lincoln; the life and death of Edward II. by sir Thomas de la Moor; and that of Edward III. down to the year 1356, by Robert Avesbury, keeper of the registry of the court of Canterbury. There is also the account of the expedition of Richard I. to the Holy Land by Walter Vinisau, who accompanied him; the 'Gesta Regis Stephani' by an anonymous author, and the lives and deeds of Henry II. and Richard I. by Benedict abbot of Peterborough. The conquest of England by William the Norman is related by his chaplain, William of Poitou (*Pictavensis*), and by William of Jumièges (*Gemmeticensis*); and another Norman historian, Ordericus Vitalis, carries the history down to the year 1140. The Scottish historians, such as Fordun and Wintoun, are authorities for the Scottish, and Froissart, Monstrelet and others for the French wars of the kings of England.

Finally, the 'Fœdera' of Rymer and the 'Rolls of Parliament' and 'Statutes of the Realm' furnish most valuable information to the student of English history.

B, page 4.

BRITISH TRIBES.

The following were the principal British tribes or nations:—1. Damnonii (Cornwall and Devon). 2. Durotriges (Dorset). 3. Belgæ (Somerset, Wilts, Hants, Wight). 4. Atrebatii (Berks). 5. Regni (Surrey, Sussex). 6. Cantii (Kent). 7. Dobuni (Oxford, Gloucester). 8. Cattieuchlani (Beds, Bucks, Herts). 9. Trinobantes (Essex, Middlesex). 10. Iceni (Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridge, Huntingdon). 11. Coritani (Northampton, Leicester, Rutland, Lincoln, Nottingham, Derby). 12. Cornavii (Warwick, Worcester, Stafford, Salop, Cheshire). 13. Silures (South Wales). 14. Dimitæ (Caermarthen, Cardigan, Pembroke). 15. Ordovices (North Wales). 16. Brigantes (from the Humber to the Tees). 17. Ottaduni (thence to the Tyne).

C, page 14.

NAMES OF PLACES.

The names of most places show their Saxon origin. Thus the Saxon *býrig*, *buph*, (*town*), exhibits itself in *bur*, *bury*, *borough*, *brough*, as Burton, Sunbury, Brougham; *ƿeod* (*place*) in *stead*, *sted*, as Hampstead; *hýrȝ* (*forest*) in *hurst*, as Penshurst; *leaz* (*lea*, *plain*) in *lay*, *ley*, *lea*, *leigh*, as Layton, Bexley, and a number of proper names, as

Stanley, Ashley, Townley, Raleigh; *ȝtop* (*abode*), *stow*, *sto*, as Godstow, Walthamstow; *þopp* (*village*) in *thorp*, *throp*, as Althorp; *peop-ſiȝ* (*street, village, farm*) in *worthy*, *worth*, as Worthy, Holdsworth, Tamworth, Ialeworth; *ham* (*home, dwelling*) in *ham*, as Witham, Petersham, Grantham; *īȝ*, *eȝe* (*island*) in *e*, *ea*, *ey*, as Eton, Eaton, Thorney; *tun* (*town*) in *ton*, as Whitton, Kingston; *ȝtoc* (*tree or wood*) in *stock*, *stoke*, as Woodstock, Basingstoke; *ceap* (*traffic*) in *chepe*, *chip*, *chipping*, as Chippenham, Chipstead, Chipping-Ongar, East Cheap; *ƿopd* (*ford*) in *ford*, as Thetford, Stratford, Stafford; *bupn* (*stream*) in *burn*, *born*, as Kilburn, Holborn, Sherborn; *bruce* (*bridge*) in *bridge*, Cambridge; *felb* (*field*) in *field*, as Wakefield; *muð* (*mouth*) in *mouth*, as Portsmouth, Plymouth; *hȝe* (*landing-place*) in *hithe*, as Rotherhithe (Redriff), Queenhithe, Lambhithe (Lambeth); *hlaf* (*eminence*) in *low*, as Marlow, Ludlow. The Danish *bȝe* (*town*) may be found in Derby, Whitby, and many towns and villages on the eastern coast; the Roman *castrum* in *cester*, *chester*, Worcester, Winchester; *vicus* in *wick* and *wick*, Norwich, Chiswick; and *stratum*, in *strat*, *street*, Stratford, &c. Celtic names are rare. In this language *amhain* (pr. *awan* or *owan*) akin to *amnis*, is a *river*, and *uisge* or *iske* is *water*. There are three or more rivers in England named Avon the same as the former, and the Axe, Exe, Esk, (to which we may perhaps add the Isis, Ouse and Wash,) are connected with the latter. *Don* is in Celtic, an eminence or fort, and it seems to have remained in Doncaster, Dunstable, etc.

D, page 33.

ALFRED THE GREAT.

The pleasing anecdote of the manner in which this great prince first became acquainted with letters is related by Asser, his friend and biographer. Its truth, therefore, cannot well be questioned; yet it is not without its difficulties, as will thus appear. In 855, when Alfred was but six years old, his father married the French princess Judith; we are therefore to suppose that the queen, Alfred's mother, was then dead. In 857 Ethelbald married his father's widow; he was succeeded in 860 by his brother Ethelbert, who must have been then grown up. In 861, therefore, when Alfred was twelve years old (and Asser says it was when he was twelve or more)*, there only remained Ethelred and himself to contend for the book, and where was their mother then?

The other anecdote of Alfred and the herdsman's wife is to be found in most MSS. of Asser; but Mr. Wise, the Oxford editor of his work in

* "Usque ad duodecimum ætatis annum et eo amplius illiteratus permansit."

1722, says in a note, "Hic loci mutilus est Codex Cott;" and as the life of St. Neot is quoted as the authority for it (a thing most improbable for the bishop of Sherborne to do, who could have had the story from the king's own lips) we regard it as an interpolation. At the same time we see no reason whatever to doubt of its truth. It is remarkable that the reproof of the good woman is couched in two Latin hexameters:—

Urere quos cernis panes gyrare moraris
Cum nimium (*valde*) gaudes hos manducare calentes.

As there are no other Latin verses in Asser's work, these furnish a proof or presumption of interpolation.

E, page 48.

VALUE OF MONEY.

The sums mentioned as paid to the Danes were in pounds of twelve ounces of silver, delivered by weight and not by tale, and it is probable that the far greater part was uncoined. At the present day a pound of standard silver is coined into *sixty-six* shillings, *i. e.* 3*l.* 6*s.*, but as four of these go for seignorage or duty, for the cost of manufacture, the mint price of bullion is 5*s.* 2*d.* an ounce, and the pound of silver is worth 3*l.* 2*s.* We should therefore multiply the sums mentioned in the text by three, in order to obtain their apparent value at the present day. The cause of this is the unjust and impolitic practice, so often recurred to by governments in the middle ages, of lowering the standard by diminishing the quantity of metal in the various coins in order to be able to pay their debts and other engagements with a smaller portion of the precious metals. In England, as we see, the pound sterling has been reduced to about a third of its original weight; but the Scots *pund* is only about the thirty-sixth, and the French *livre* or *franc* about the sixty-sixth part of the pound Troy.

Computed in this manner the various sums paid by king Ethelred to the Danes will not appear very enormous, the largest of them, 48,000*l.*, being only about 144,000*l.*, and the total of 128,000*l.* paid in a space of twenty-one years, being about 384,000*l.*

But we should err very widely if we supposed this to be the real value of the quantity of bullion delivered to the Danes; a pound of silver had a far greater command over food and other necessities in those days than it has at present. It is not incumbent on us to enter here into the question of the origin of value; it may suffice to say that the more rare (from whatever cause) anything is, for which there is a constant demand, the greater will be its value in exchange. Now the precious metals during all the course of the middle ages were remark-

ably scarce in Europe; the mines of Spain and other parts whence the people of the old states used to derive them being nearly or altogether exhausted, and there having been ever since the time of the end of the Roman republic a constant drain of them to the East in exchange for the commodities of that region.

The price of corn, though but an indifferent measure of value, is, perhaps, the best that can be had, as the quantity of it requisite for the support of a human being is pretty much the same at all times. The average price of the quarter of wheat from 1827 to 1837, a space of ten years, has been 2*l.* 16*s.*, and we may compare with this the accounts of prices in the middle ages. In the 'Wealth of Nations' there is a table given of the prices of wheat; but as earlier accounts could not be procured, it does not go higher than the commencement of the 13th century. Rejecting from it the high famine prices and the very low ones of years of extraordinary plenty, we may say that during that century the price of wheat ranged from 3*s.* to 12*s.* the quarter, 8*s.* = 1*l.* 4*s.* being perhaps the average. In the succeeding century the average was, it would seem, not more than 6*s.* = 18*s.*, and in the 15th century about 5*s.* = 10*s.* the standard having been reduced. For the first half of the 16th century the average seems to have been 8*s.* = 8*s.* the quantity of silver in the shilling being the same as it is now. Henceforth, in consequence of the influx of the precious metals from the mines of America, their value sank and the prices of wheat for a century ranged from 1*l.* 10*s.* to 3*l.*

By the 'Statute of Labourers' passed in the reign of Edward III. the wages of a master-mason were fixed at 4*d.* a day, those of carpenters, tilers, and others at 3*d.* and their journeymen at 1½*d.*; hay-makers had 1*d.*, reapers 2*d.* and 3*d.*, and mowers 5*d.* a day. It also appears that in the thirteenth century a sheep might be bought for 1*s.* and an ox for 10*s.* or 12*s.*

From a consideration of these prices, Mr. Hallam is led to the conclusion, that to bring sums mentioned in the thirteenth century to their present value, we should multiply by twenty-four, and for the time of Henry VI. by sixteen. These multiples, however, seem to us to be much too large. Considering the very inferior kind of food, raiment, etc., used by the lower orders in those times, 2*s.* or even 1*s.* 4*d.* a day, is too much for the wages of a day-labourer.

F, page 69.

FORCES OF THE DUKE OF NORMANDY.

The number of William's ships was 3000 according to Gemmeticensis. Wace, in his 'Roman de Rou,' says he had heard of that number, but that his father had told him there were only 696. The 'Chronique

de Normandie' says that some said there were 907 ships besides the small craft.

G. Pictavensis, William's chaplain, estimates the army at sixty thousand men, of which fifty thousand were *milites*, that is men-at-arms, or knights and squires. As, however, the number of knights in the roll of Battle Abbey is but four hundred, Sismondi ('Hist. des François,' iv. 352) says, that if we calculate according to the military usages of the age, and compare William's armament with that of the fourth Crusade, of which alone we have an exact enumeration of the component parts, the result will be as follows:—Each of the four hundred knights had ten *suivans d'armes*, which gives four thousand four hundred horsemen; each *suivant* had three archers or crossbow-men, making twelve thousand; and adding the crews, the whole might amount to twenty or twenty-five thousand men.

This account has been adopted by sir James Mackintosh; but, as we shall presently show, it is founded on the false assumption of the roll of Battle Abbey being a contemporary document, and a complete list of all the knights in William's army. Pictavensis is a sober and veracious historian, and as he was actually present, he could hardly have fallen into the error of magnifying the army so far beyond its real amount; yet he might have chanced to double the number of the horsemen, as he probably had no guide but his eye for estimating it. On the whole, we see no great improbability in the common account of the Conqueror's army having contained sixty thousand men; but of these the greater part must have been infantry, as the horsemen formed but one division at the battle of Hastings.

G, page 73.

ROLL OF BATTLE ABBEY.

Duchesne, at the end of his '*Scriptores Rerum Normannicarum*,' gives the following list of names.

Cognomina nobilium qui Guill. Norm. ducem in Angliam sequuti sunt.

[Ex tabula Monasterii de Bello in Anglia vulgo Battail Abbey.]

Aumerle.	Aspervilë.	Bardolf.
Audeley.	Amonderville.	Basset.
Angilliam.	Arey (<i>Airey</i>).	Bohun.
Argentoun.	Akeny.	Baylife.
Arundell.	Albeny.	Bondeville.
Avenant (<i>Davenant</i>).	Asperemound.	Barbason (<i>Brabazon</i>).
Abel.	Bertram.	Beer.
Awgers.	Buttecourt.	Bures.
Augenoun.	Bræhus.	Bonylayne.
Archer.	Byseg.	Bardayon.

Berners.	Belhelme.	Charles.
Braybuf.	Braunche.	Chareberge.
Brand.	Bolesur.	Chawnes.
Bonville.	Blundell.	Chawmont.
Burgh.	Burdet.	Cheyne.
Bussy.	Bigot.	Cursen (<i>Curzon</i>).
Blundill.	Beaupount.	Conell.
Breton.	Boola.	Chayters.
Belasys.	Belepoune.	Cheynes.
Bowser.	Barchampe.	Caterey.
Boyon.	Camos.	Cherecourt.
Bulmere.	Chanville.	Chaunville.
Broune.	Chawent.	Clerency.
Beke.	Chancy.	Curly.
Bowlers.	Couderay.	Clyfford.
Banestre.	Colville.	Deauville.
Belomy.	Chamberlaine.	Dercy (<i>Darcy</i>).
Belknap.	Chambernowne.	Dine.
Beauchamp.	Cribet.	Dispencer (<i>Spencer</i>).
Bandy.	Corbine.	Daniel.
Broyleby.	Corbet.	Denyse.
Burnel.	Coniers.	Druell.
Bolot.	Chaundos.	Devaus.
Beufort.	Coucy.	Davers.
Baudewine.	Chaworthe.	Doningsels.
Burdon (<i>Burton</i> ?).	Claremaus.	Darell.
Berteuyley.	Clarell.	Delebere.
Barte.	Camnine.	De la Pole.
Busseville.	Chaunduyt.	De la Lind.
Blunt.	Clarvays.	De la Hill.
Beawper.	Chantilowe.	De la Ware.
Bret.	Colet.	De la Watche.
Barret.	Cressy.	Dakeny.
Barneville (<i>Barnwall</i> ?).	Courtenay.	Dauntre.
Barry.	Constable.	Desuye.
Bodyt.	Chancer (<i>Chaucer</i> ?).	Dabernounc.
Bertevile.	Cholmeley.	Damry.
Bertine.	Corlevile.	Daucros.
Belew.	Champeney	De la Vere.
Buschell.	(<i>Champneys</i>).	De Liele.
Beleners.	Carew.	De la Warde.
Buffard.	Chawnos.	De la Planch.
Boteler (<i>Butler</i>).	Clarvaile.	Danway (<i>Hanway</i> ?).
Botvile.	Champaine.	De Hewse.
Brasard.	Carbonell.	Disard.

Durant.	Gray.	Le Despencer (<i>Spencer</i>).
Diury.	Golofer.	Marmilon.
Estrange.	Grauns.	Moribray.
Estutaville.	Gurly.	Morville.
Escriols.	Gurdon.	Manley.
Engayne.	Gamages.	Malebranche.
Evers.	Gaunt.	Malemaine.
Esturney.	Hansard.	Muschampe.
Folvile.	Hastings.	Musgrave.
Fitz Water.	Haulay.	Mesni-le-Villers.
Fitz Marmaduk.	Husie (<i>Hussey</i>).	Mortmaine.
Fibert.	Herne.	Muse.
Fitz Roger.	Hamelyn.	Martene.
Fitz Robert.	Hanwell.	Mountbocher.
Fanecourt.	Hardel.	Maleville.
Fitz Philip.	Hecket (<i>Hacket</i>).	Mountnay.
Fitz William.	Hamound (<i>Hammond</i>).	Maleherbe.
Fitz Paine.	Harecord (<i>Harcourt</i>).	Musgros.
Fitz Alyne.	Jarden (<i>Jardine</i>).	Musard.
Fitz Ranulfe.	Jay.	Mautravers.
Fitz Browne.	Janville.	Merke.
Foxe.	Jasparville.	Murris (<i>Morris</i>).
Frevile.	Karre (<i>Carr</i>).	Montagu.
Faconbrige.	Karron.	Montolent.
Frissel (<i>Frizell</i>).	Kyriell.	Mandute.
Felioll.	Lestrangle.	Manle (<i>Manley</i>).
Fitz Thomas.	Levony.	Malory.
Fitz Morice.	Latomere (<i>Latimer</i>).	Merny.
Fitz Hughe.	Loveday.	Muffet.
Fitz Warren.	Logenton.	Merpincoy.
Faunvile.	Level.	Mainard.
Formay.	Lescrope (<i>Scrope</i>).	Morell.
Formiband.	Lemare.	Morley.
Frison.	Litterile (<i>Luttrell</i>).	Mountmartin.
Finer.	Lucy.	Myners.
Fitz Urcy.	Lislay or Liele.	Mauley.
Furnivall.	Longspes.	Mainwaring.
Fitz Herbert.	Longschampe.	Mantell.
Fitz John.	Lastels.	Mayel.
Gargrave.	Lindsay.	Morton.
Graunson.	Loterel (<i>Luttrell</i>).	Nevile.
Gracy.	Longuaile.	Neumarche.
Glanvile.	Lewawse.	Norton.
Gouer (<i>Gower</i>).	Loy.	Norbet.
Gascoyne.	Lave.	Norece (<i>Norris</i>).

Newborough.	Rynel (<i>Reynell</i>).	Trussell.
Neele.	Rous.	Turbeville.
Normanville.	Russel.	Torel.
Otenel.	Rond.	Tavers.
Olibef.	Richmond.	Torel.
Olifaunt.	Rocheford.	Tirell.
Oysell.	Reymond.	Totels.
Oliford.	Seuche.	Taverner.
Oryoll.	Seint Quintine.	Valence.
Pigot.	Seint Omer.	Vancord (<i>Fancourt?</i>).
Pecy (<i>Pacey</i>).	Seint Amand.	Vavasour.
Perecount.	Seint Leger.	Vender.
Pershale.	Somervile.	Verder.
Power.	Sanford.	Verdon.
Paynel.	Somery.	Aubrie de Vere.
Peché.	Seint George.	Vernoune.
Peverell.	Seint Lés.	Verland.
Perot.	Savine.	Verlay.
Picard.	Seint Clo.	Vernois.
Pudsey.	Seint Albine.	Verny.
Pimiray (<i>Pomeroy?</i>).	Seint Barbe.	Vilon.
Pounsey.	Sandevile.	Umfravile.
Punchardon.	Seint More (<i>Seymour</i>).	Unket.
Pynchard.	Seint Scudemor.	Urnaill.
Placy.	Tows.	Wake.
Patine.	Toget.	Waledger.
Pampillion.	Talybois.	Warde.
Poterell.	Tuchet (<i>Touchet</i>).	Wardebus.
Pekeney.	Truslot.	Waren.
Pervinke.	Trusbut.	Ware.
Penicorde.	Traynel.	Wateline.
Quincy.	Taket.	Watevile.
Quintine.	Talbot.	Woly.
Rose.	Tanny.	Wyvell.
Ridle.	Tibtote.	

We do not think that this can claim to be esteemed a contemporary document; for it omits the names of some, such as Fitz Osberne and Lacy, who we know from *Pictavensis* were among the victors at Hastings, and it inserts names, such as Arundel, which were derived from places in England. We may also observe that some names are repeated in it. There are other lists of the companions of the Conqueror differing from this in many particulars; one is given by Bromton, and therefore cannot be later than the twelfth century; another was procured apparently from Battle Abbey by one of his friends for William Wyrcestre, and will be found in the '*Liber Niger Scaccarii*' published by Hearne.

In the first volume of Leland's 'Collectanea' we meet a third, and in the same place is a list of those who fought under the banner of William de Moion at Hastings.

All the names in these lists may, we think, be regarded as either those of the companions of the Conqueror, or of Normans or Frenchmen who settled in England in the time of the Anglo-Norman monarchs. Those therefore who now bear them may justly boast of a long line of known ancestry.

H, page 73.

FATE OF HAROLD.

We have in the text endeavoured to reconcile the accounts of Pictavensis and Malmesbury. The former says that William buried Harold on the strand, the latter that he gave the body to his mother, by whom it was interred at Waltham.

According to the Annals of Waltham, two of the brethren, Osgood and Ailric, followed Harold to Senlac. After the battle they craved permission of the victor to search for the body of their benefactor. Leave was granted, but they were unable to recognise it among the piles of the slain. They then went and fetched Harold's mistress Editha, called the Swan's Neck for her beauty; and her affectionate eye quickly discerned his mangled remains, which they forthwith conveyed to Waltham.

Others said that Harold was conveyed alive to Dover, that he recovered of his wounds, visited several parts of the Continent and the Holy Land, and ended his days as an anchorite in a cell near the abbey of St. John at Chester*. Finally, Knighton says that William gave Harold's body to his mother without any ransom, that he was not quite dead, and that he lived for nine months.

I, page 74.

ANGLO-SAXON TERMS.

Eopl answers to the Scandinavian Jarl (pr. Yarl); the cunb in eopl-cundman would seem to be connected with cȳn, *kin*, and Eorlcundman to be therefore a man of the race of the Eorls. It is obvious that the modern word Earl is merely the Saxon Eorl, which was probably pronounced *yorl*, as the modern word is provincially *yerl*.

Sidcundman is said to be derived from fīðian, *to go*, and therefore to signify *comes*, *companion*. Lye thinks that *sidesman* is derived from it.

* Giraldus Cambrensis, Itin. Walliæ. Harleian MS. 3779. Turner, Anglo-Saxons, ii. 419. 6th edit.

Hlaforð which has been corrupted into *lord*, and hlæfgyz, *lady*, seem to be connected with hlaƿ, *loaf, bread*, as being the dispensers of food to those under them.

Ceopl, the *churl* of the modern language, is the opposite of eorl. It is perhaps best explained by the term *peasant*. The ceorl was also called bonde, which still remains in the words *husband* (huy-bonde, *pater-familias*;) and *husbandry*, and zebur, whence the word *boor*, which like *churl* has acquired an evil sense, signifying rudeness and brutality; just as *villain*, the Latin *villanus*, now denotes a man devoid of moral feeling.

Heorð-fæȝt is composed of heorð, *hearth*, and fæȝt, *close, firm*, as in the modern *holdfast, fast asleep, fast by*.

Folzge is merely a follower, from folgian, *to follow*. In Ireland the term *follower* is still used to denote a person of the lower order whose family has long been in the service of a family of higher rank.

The word ðeop, *slave*, has, we believe, left no trace in the modern language.

Ðegen, ðegn, *thane*, is derived from the verb ðegnian, *to serve*, and answers to the German *diener*. Cniht, *knight*, also signified a *boy, lad*, or *servant*, the German *knecht*. It is curious to remark the honourable sense which these two terms acquired in Anglo-Saxon and English, while their German kindred remained in their original obscurity.

Genefa like zebur lost its first syllable in the progress of time, and became *reeve*. It is the same word as the German *graf*, a count; and here it is the German word which occupies the place of honour. We retain the word *reeve* in *portreeve, sheriff*, i. e. *shire-reeve*. In Scotland reeve is still used for a steward or bailiff, as in old English.

Mot or zemot is simply *meeting* or *meeting-place*, from metan, *to meet*; the city of London still has its wardmotes: ȝcipe, *shire*, is a *division* from ȝcpan, *to sheer* or *share*: tun, *town*, comes, perhaps, from tynan, *to inclose*. It is to be observed that this term retains its primitive Anglo-Saxon use in Scotland and Ireland, where it is employed to express a mansion-house and its land, which in the latter country is called a *town-land*. It would appear from the 'Life of Colonel Hutchinson,' that in the seventeenth century this primitive usage of the word *town* continued in some parts of England; perhaps it does so still.

Lade signifies *purgation*, from ladian, *to discharge*, hence lade is also *the mouth of a river*; onðæl is *judgement*, the German *urtheil*; bote is *boot, compensation*.

We have thus, we believe, explained all the Anglo-Saxon terms in the text which required any elucidation; but before we conclude this article we will make a few remarks on that language.

It will be observed that nearly all the words which are pronounced by *ch* in modern English are written with *ce* or *c* in Anglo-Saxon, ex. gr. ceaf, *chaff*; cealc, *chalk*; ceapian, *to cheapen (buy)*; ceo, *chough*;

ceþnan, *to churn*; cīðan, *to chide*; cild, *child*; ceoler-ize, *Chelsea*, etc. Further, that the English *sh* takes the place of the Anglo-Saxon *ȝc* before the vowels *e* and *i*, as *ȝceab*, *shade*; *ȝceaf*, *sheaf*; *ȝceal*, *shall*; *ȝceap* or *ȝcep*, *sheep*; *ȝcearp*, *sharp*; *ȝcip*, *ship*; *ȝcilling*, *shilling*; *ȝcylð*, *shield*, etc.; and also in some other cases, as *ȝcþuð*, *shroud*; *cildȝc*, *childish*; *ceopȝc*, *churlish*; *enȝȝc*, *English*; *menȝc*, *marsh*.

As these exactly correspond with the usage in the Italian language (*cento*, *cibo*, *lancia*, *lasciare*), might we not infer that our forefathers said *chorl* and not *keorl*; *child* and not *kild*; *ship* and not *skip*; and that the modern mode of pronunciation prevailed in Italy in the sixth century when the missionaries introduced the orthography of that country into England? Indeed, though it is highly probable, we have no convincing proof that the old Romans themselves did not pronounce Scipio and Cicero, *Shipio* and *Chichero*, rather than *Skipio* and *Kikero*, for it is quite clear they did not say *Sipio* and *Sisero*.

The Anglo-Saxon *ȝ* seems, like our *y*, to have frequently served merely to lengthen the preceding vowel, as in *ȝegan*, *to say*, and many other infinitives, in *ȝeȝl*, *sail*, *ȝeȝl*, *fowl*, *ðæȝ*, *day*. In the beginning of a word it may have sounded like *y*, as *ȝeȝl-ȝȝnd*, *sail-yard*. This may explain the loss of the first syllable in *gerefa* and other words, and the change of *ȝe* in participles into *y*, as *ȝebopen*, *y-born*.

That *ȝ* was sometimes mute is further proved by the substitution of *h* for it, as *bȝȝȝ*, *buph*; we write the Anglo-Saxon *cniht*, *knight*. This also explains why *gh* is mute in English words.

In MSS. the Anglo-Saxon *ȝ* is frequently used for *y*, and as it resembles a *z*, editors commonly print that letter for it, and thus we meet with *zet* and *rizt* for *yet* and *right*, and similar absurdities. In some Scottish proper names the *z* appears to the eye, while a *y* meets the ear. Thus *Menzies* is pronounced *Menyies*, and *Dalzell*, *Dalyell*. In like manner the *y*, in *y^c*, *the*, *y^t*, *that*, etc., is apparently the Anglo-Saxon *ȝ*, *th*.

K, page 93.

THE NORMAN CLERGY.

As Dr. Lingard has as usual portrayed these men in favourable colours, we give the following passages from contemporary writers.

"Nonnulli etiam ecclesiastici viri," says Ordericus (p. 523), "qui sapientes et religiosi videbantur, regali curiæ pro dignitatibus cupitis obnixæ famulabantur et diversis assentationum modis non sine dedecore religiøsæ opinionis adulabantur. Sicut tironibus suæ a principibus erogabantur stipendia militiæ; sic quibusdam coronatis [*tonsured*] pro famulatu suo dabantur a laicis episcopatus et abbatie, ecclesiarum præposituræ, archidiaconatus et deconia, aliæque potestates et dignitates ecclesiæ quas meritum sanctitatis et sapientiæ doctrina solummodo de-

bent obtinere. Clerici et monachi nunc terreno principi pro talibus stipendiis inhærebant; et pro temporali commodo multiplex servitium quod divino cultui non competit, indecenter impendebant. Prisci abbates secularis comminatione potestatis terrebantur et sine synodali discussione de sedibus suis injuste fugabantur; pro quibus stipendiarii, non monachi sed tyranni, contra sanctorum scita canonum intrudebantur. Conventio et profectus fiebat inter comessos greges et archimandritas hujusmodi qualis inter lupos et bidentes sine defensore solet fieri." He then relates the story of Thurston, abbot of Glastonbury, and adds, "Multa his similia referri possent si lectoris animum salubriter ædificarent."

"This year (1083)," says the Saxon Chronicle, "arose the tumult at Glastonbury betwixt the abbot Thurston and his monks. It first came of this abbot's un wisdom [imprudence] that he misgoverned his monks in many things, but the monks meant well to him and told him that he should govern them rightly and love them, and they would be faithful and obedient to him. Yet the abbot would none of this, but did them evil, and threatened them worse. One day the abbot yode [went] into the chapter-house and spake against the monks and would mislead them*, and sent for laymen; and they came into the chapter-room and upon the monks full-armed, and then were the monks greatly afear'd of them and wist not what were to be done, and they shot-on [made off]; some of them ran into the church and locked the doors after them, but they yode [went] after them into the minster and would drag them out when they did not dare to go out; and a rueful thing befell these that day when the Frenchmen brake into the choir and hurled their weapons toward the altar where the monks were, and some of the knights went up on the upper floor and shot down with arrows toward the holy place, so that on the rood [crucifix] that stood above the altar they stuck many arrows. And the wretched monks lay about the altar, and some crept under it and earnestly called on God imploring his mercy since they could get no mercy from men. What may we say but that they shot on still and then others brake down the doors and yode [went] in and slew some of the monks to death and wounded many therein, so that the blood came from the altar upon the steps, and from the steps on the floor. Three there were slain to death and eighteen wounded." See also the history of John of Glastonbury, p. 158, ed. Hearne.

L, page 96.

FATE OF THE NORMANS.

In 'La Hougue Bie de Hambie, a tradition of Jersey,' by James Bulkeley, Esq., to which a body of very curious antiquarian and topographical notes relating to Normandy is appended, the following account

* By introducing a new kind of chant instead of the Gregorian.

is given of the fate of some of the principal companions of the Conqueror. We do not, however, pledge ourselves for its correctness.

Odo, Viceroy, brother to the Duke, Count Palatine of Kent, imprisoned by William. Lands confiscated by Rufus.

Robert, Earl of Mortain and Cornwall, governor of Pevensey Castle, brother to the Duke. 973 seigniories.

His son William died mutilated in prison. His lands confiscated by Rufus.

Eudes, Lord of Albemarle and Holderness, half brother to the Duke, died in prison. Lands confiscated by Rufus.

Geoffrey, Bishop of Coutance. 248 manors, bequeathed to his nephew Mowbray, confiscated by Rufus.

Roger Fitz-Osborne, Earl of Hereford and the Isle of Wight. Lands confiscated by William: died in prison.

William Fitz-Osborne, Lord of Breteuil. No issue.

Ralph de Gauder, Earl of Norfolk, imprisoned during the life of William. Lands confiscated: died in the Holy Land.

Hugo de Grentmesnil, Earl of Leicester, governor of Hampshire. Lands confiscated by William. Issue died young.

Humphrey de Telleuil, Count of Hastings. Lands confiscated by William.

Robert D'Eu, cousin to the Duke, emasculated by Rufus. No issue.

Ralph de Warrenne. 298 manors, confiscated by Henry on his son William.

Mowbray, Earl of Northumberland, died in prison. Lands confiscated by Rufus.

Hugh de Gourney, retired to a convent. His heir, Girard, having no inheritance in England, went to the Holy Land.

Eustace de Boulogne. Lands confiscated by Rufus.

Robert de Bellême. Lands confiscated by Rufus.

Alain the Red, Count of Brittany. No issue.

Robert de Molines, banished by Henry. No issue.

Hugh d'Avranches, Earl of Chester. Brother, son, and grandsons perished in the Blanche Nef with William Adelin.

Roger de Lacy, 185 manors. Lands confiscated by Rufus.

Walter de Treley, extinct. Henry I.

Quesnay, extinct. Henry I., or soon after.

Hugh de Montfort, 114 manors: became monk. *Robert*, his son, banished by Henry I., died in the Holy Land.

William Mallet, Sheriff of York; great grants in Suffolk; confiscated from his son *Robert* by Henry I.

Bernard de Saint Valery refused all grants, and returned with his followers to Normandy.

William de Vieux Pont, killed in 1085 [*Ord. Vit.*], or died in the convent of St. Pierre-sur-Dive. [*Gal. Christ.*]

Robert de Beaufou and his sons took the cowl, and died in the convent of Bec.

William Cripin, 84 manors. His son Milon died without issue. Henry I.

Robert de la Haie, Lord of Hainac. His son had no male issue.

Fitz-Ernest, killed at Hastings.

Ralph Tesson, killed at Hastings.

Engenulfe de l'Aigle, killed at Hastings.

M, page 144.

THOMAS À BECKET.

In Stephanides' or Fitz Stephen's very interesting biography of Becket, the following curious traits of manners occur.

Becket ordered his dining-room (*hospitium*) to be strewn every day in winter with fresh straw or hay, in summer with fresh rushes or green leaves, that a clean and neat floor might receive the multitude of knights whom the benches could not contain, lest their precious garments or handsome shirts (*camisia*) should be spotted by the dirt of the floor.

When serious matters were over, Becket and the king used to play like boys. One severe day in winter as they were riding through one of the streets of London, the king saw a poor old man with a threadbare coat approaching. He pointed him out to the chancellor and asked him would it not be a great charity to give him a thick warm cloak. He replied that it would, and that it became the king to attend to such things. By this time the poor man had come up; they stopped, the king asked him if he would like to have a good cloak, and turning to the chancellor said, "In sooth you shall do this great act of charity." He then seized his rich new cloak of scarlet and gris, and attempted to pull it off; the chancellor resisted; in the struggle they were both near coming to the ground; the knights and nobles who were following them could not conceive what they were at. At length the chancellor yielded; the king gave the cloak to the poor man, and then told the story.

We will allow the biographer to describe in his own Latin the progress of the vain-glorious chancellor in his embassy to France.

"Circiter ducentos in equis secum habuit de familia sua milites, clericos, dapiferos, servientes [*sergeants*], armigeros [*esquires*], nobilium filios inclitantes ei et omnes armis instructos. Omnes isti et omnis eorum sequela novo festivo fulgebant ornatu vestium, quisque pro modo suo. Habuit etiam viginti quatuor mutatoria vestimentorum omnia fere donanda et in transmarinis relinquenda, et omnem elegantiam varii [*vair*], grysi [*gris*] et pellium peregrinarum, palliorum quoque et tapetum, quibus thalamus et lectus episcopi hospitio recepti ornabantur.

Habuit secum canes, avis omne genus quo reges utuntur et divites. Habuit in comitatu suo octo bigas curules, unamquamque bigam quinque equi trahebant, dextrariis [*destriers*] corpore et robore similes; quisque equus suum sibi deputatum habebat fortem juvenem nova tunica succinctum, euntem cum biga; ipsaque biga suum veredum [*single horse*] et custodem. Duæ bigæ solam cervisiam trahebant, factam in aquæ decoctione ex adipe frumenti, in cadis ferratis, donandam Francis. Habebat Cancellarii capella bigam suam, camera suam, expensa [*spence, pantry*] suam, coquina suam; portabant aliæ esculentorum et poculantorum aliquid, aliæ dorsalia taveta [*tapeta*], saccos cum vestibus nocturnis, sarcinas et impedimenta. Habuit duodecim summarios [*somiers, beasts of burden*]. Octo scrinia Cancellarii continebant, supellectilem auream scilicet et argenteam, vasculos, cullulos, pateras, ciphos [*scyphos*], cuppas, urceolas, pelves, salina, cochlearea, cultellas, paropsides. Aliæ coffræ et clitellæ Cancellarii continebant monetam, æs plurimum quotidianis ejus impensis et donis sufficiens, et vestes ejus et libros aliquot et hujusmodi. Unus summarius capellæ sacra vasa et altaris ornamenta et libros portabat, cæterorum præambulus. Quisque summariorum suum habebat agasonem qualem et qualiter decuit instructum. Quæque etiam biga habebat canem alligatum vel supra vel subtus, magnum fortem terribilem; qui ursum vel leonem domiturus videretur. Sed et supra quemque summarium erat vel simia caudata vel

— humani simulator simius oris.

"In ingressu Gallicarum villarum et castrorum [*castles*] primi veniebant garciones [*garçons*] pedites, quasi ducenti quinquaginta gregatim euntes, sex vel deni vel plures simul, aliquid lingua suo pro more patriæ suæ cantantes. Sequebantur aliquo intervallo canes copulati et leporarii [*greyhounds*], in loris et laxis [*laces, leashes*], suis cum concurretoribus et sequacibus suis. Post modicum stridebant ad lapides platearum illæ bigæ ferratæ, magnis coriis animalium coopertæ. Sequebantur ad modicam distantiam summarii, agasonibus positus genibus super clunes summariorum equitantibus. Sequuntur post summarios armigeri [*esquires*] militum, portantes scuta et trahentes dextrarios; inde alii armigeri; dehinc ephebi; deinde qui aves portabant; postea dapiferi et magistri et ministri domus Cancellarii; deinde milites et clerici; omnes bini et bini equitantes; postremo Cancellarius et aliqui familiares ejus circa eum."

N, page 168.

FAIR ROSAMOND.

Bromton, who loved a romantic tale, is the earliest author who notices the story of Fair Rosamond. His words are these:

"Regina sua Elianora jamdudum incarcerata, factus est adulter ma-

nifestus palam et impudice, puellam retinens Rosamundam. Huic nempe puellæ spectatissimæ fecerat rex apud Wodestoke mirabilis architecturæ cameram operi Dedalino similem, ne forsân a regina facile deprehenderetur. Sed illa cito obiit, et apud Godestowe juxta Oxoniam in capitulo monialium in tumba decenti est sepulta, ubi talis suprascriptio invenitur :

Hic jacet in tumba Rosa mundi non Rosa munda ;
Non redolet sed olet quæ redolere solet."

The story, like most of the kind, gained in time ; for Fabyan, the next who notices it, says the king "had made her a house of a wonder-working, so that no creature, man nor woman, might win [get] to her, but if he were instruct by the king or such as were right secret with him, touching the matter. But the common fame telleth that lastly the queen came to her by a clew of thread or silk, and dealt with her in such manner that she lived not long after." Hollingshed adds that the king happened to draw the clew of silk with his foot from her chamber to the entrance. Speed says, that as Rosamond was sitting out in the air, she was startled at the sight of those who were in quest of her ; she ran in, but dropped her clew, and the end caught in her foot and thus unwound. In the ballad the knight who had charge of her is called out ; he is then slain, and his clew seized ; the queen goes in and forces Rosamond to drain a bowl of poison.

The progress of the tale is this. Henry kept Rosamond privately, hence the notion of a labyrinth ; this suggested the clew of Ariadne ; then some mode was to be devised by which the queen obtained it. On Rosamond's tomb among other ornaments was the figure of a *cup*, and hence the poisoning was added.

There is no doubt of Longsword's being the son of Henry and Rosamond. The earl of Salisbury died in 1196, and after his death king Richard gave the heiress Ela to his natural brother William, who was then probably about five-and-twenty. Longsword died in 1226 after his return from Guienne, whither he had accompanied the king's (Henry III.) younger brother Richard. As from the narrative in Paris he appears to have been in full vigour at that time, and his death was ascribed to poison, he was probably not more than fifty-five.

We have gone into these details, because it is said that Geoffrey archbishop of York, who was born in 1159, was Henry's *youngest* child by Rosamond. This throws back the amour with Rosamond to the beginning of his reign, and makes Longsword nearly seventy when he died. We may further observe that according to Dugdale Rosamond's *eldest* brother Walter died in 7 Henry III. (1222), that is when Geoffrey was sixty-three. It is therefore probable that Geoffrey was not his nephew.

The common derivation of Rosamond, *quasi* Rosa Mundi, is wrong. It is an ancient Teutonic name Rosmund, i. e. *Rose-mouth*, like Wármund (Pharamond), *True-mouth*.

O, page 178.

KING RICHARD AND BLONDEL.

"It is thus, we should think, quite evident that the English nation were not for any time ignorant of the fate of their king, and of the place of his captivity. Accordingly, none of the historians express any doubt on the subject; but a romantic tale of the discovery of his prison, by a distinguished minstrel, named Blondel de Nesle, gradually gained ground, and eventually is become a part of most histories of England. The tale is thus told in a manuscript chronicle of the thirteenth century:—*

" 'Now we tell you of king Richard, whom the duke of Austria held in prison, and no one knew aught of him, save only the duke and his councillors. Now it happened, that he had for a long time had a minstrel who was born in Artois, and was named Blondiaus. This man resolved in himself, that he would seek his lord in all countries till he had found him, or till he had heard tidings of him; and so he set forth, and he wandered day after day so long by pool and marsh, that he had spent a year and a half, and never could hear any sure tidings of the king; and he rambled on till he came into Austria, as chance led him, and went straight to the castle where the king was in prison; and he took up his abode in the house of a widow woman, and asked her whose was that castle that was so fair and strong and well-seated. The hostess made answer, and said that it was the duke of Austria's. 'Fair hostess,' said Blondiaus, 'is there any prisoner in it now?' 'Yea, doubtless,' said she, 'one who has been there these four years, but we cannot learn of a certainty who he is; but they guard him very diligently, and we surely think that he is a gentle man and a great lord.' And when Blondiaus heard these words he marvelled, and he thought in his heart that he had found what he was in quest of, but he said nought of it to the hostess. He slept that night and was at ease, and when he heard the horn sounding the day, he got up and went to the church to pray to God to aid him; and then he came to the castle, and went up to the castellan and told him that he was a player on the viol, and would willingly abide with him if it pleased him. The castellan was a young knight and handsome, and he said that he would willingly retain him. Then Blondiaus departed, and he went for his viol and his instruments, and he so served the castellan, that he was well with all the family and his services pleased much. So he stayed there all the winter, and he never could know who the prisoner was. At length, he was going one day in the festival of Easter through the garden which was by the tower, and he looked around to try if by any chance he could see the prisoner. So

* Michaud, *Histoire des Croisades*, vol. ii.

while he was in that thought, the king looked and saw Blondiaus, and thought how he should make himself known to him; and he called to mind a song which they had made between them two, and which no one knew save the king. So he began loud and clearly to sing the first verse, for he sung right well. And when Blondiaus heard him, he knew of a certainty that it was his lord, and he had the greatest joy in his heart that ever he had on any day; and he went forthwith out of the orchard and entered his chamber where he lay, and took his viol and began to play a note, and in playing he delighted himself on account of his master whom he had found. So Blondiaus tarried till Pentecost, and concealed himself so well that no one doubted of his secret. Then Blondiaus came to the castellan and said to him, 'Sire, if it please you, I would willingly go to mine own country, for it is a long time since I have been there.' 'Blondiel my fair brother,' said the castellan, 'this you will by no means do if you believe me, but you will remain here and I will do you great good.' 'Certes, sire,' said Blondiaus, 'I would not stay on any wise.' When the castellan saw that he could not keep him, he gave him his congé and therewith a good nag. Then Blondiaus parted from the castellan and journeyed till he came to England, and told the friends of the king and the barons where he had found the king and how. When they heard these tidings they were greatly rejoiced, for the king was the most liberal knight that ever wore a spur. And they took counsel among them to send to Austria to the duke to ransom the king, and they chose two knights to go thither of the most valiant and most wise. And they journeyed till they came to Austria to the duke, and they found him in one of his castles, and they saluted him on the part of the barons of England, and said to him, 'Sire, they send to you and pray that you will take ransom for their lord, and they will give you as much as you desire.' The duke replied, that he would take counsel on it, and when he had taken counsel, he said, 'Lords, if ye wish to have him ye must ransom him for two hundred thousand marks sterling, and make no reply, for it would be lost labour.' Then the messengers took leave of the duke, and said that they would report it to the barons, and they would then take counsel on it. So they came back to England and told the barons what the duke had said, and they said that the matter should not stand for that. Then they made ready the ransom and they sent it to the duke, and the duke delivered up to them the king; but he first made them give him good security, that he should never be molested for it.'

"Another chronicle quoted by Fouchet* gives a similar account. It says, that Blondel came one day before a window of the tower in which Richard was confined, and began to sing a song which they had made

* *Recueil de l'origine de la langue et poésie François, rime et romans*, p. 92.

together. When he had sung it half through the king took it up and sang the remainder, and thus Blondel knew that it was his master.

"It is scarcely necessary to say that romances like these are not to be set in comparison with the narratives of sober historians like Matthew Paris, and that, therefore, the whole tale of Richard and Blondel should be regarded as a mere fiction. It is very displeasing to the inquirer after historic truth to see such a writer as sir James Mackintosh relating the tale as a truth on the authority of the chronicle just quoted. The reader should have been told that it is the sole authority, and its value should have been stated*.

"To this time also belongs the legend of king Richard's combat with the lion and 'robbing him of his heart,' whence he came to be called Cœur de Lion, or Lion-heart.

"We are told† that while he was a prisoner to the emperor Henry, a fierce and hungry lion was one day let loose and turned at him, with the design, it was thought, that he might tear him to pieces, and the blame might be thrown on the negligence of the keeper. But Richard, nothing daunted, wrapped his cloak round his arm, and as the lion came on with open jaws and full of fury, he thrust his arm down his throat, and grasping his heart tore it out, and then ate it 'hot and raw,' whence, says our author, he got the name of *Ricardus cor leonis*.

"It is perhaps needless to inform the reader that the feat here recorded is an impossibility, and that the name which was given to Richard for his valour gave occasion to the legend."—*Crusaders*, ii. pp. 357—362.

P, page 247.

WILLIAM WALLACE.

We must confess that we have some doubts whether Wallace was the hero his partial countrymen make him. The only contemporary writer is the riming chronicler Langtoft. He thus introduces Wallace :

"Nowe Eduard is oute the barons be not trewe,
The suffred, as it sais, the Scottis oft to rise
With William the Walais, ther hede and ther justise ;
Thugh fals concelement William did his wille,
Our castels has he brent, our men slayn fulle ille."

Langtoft further says that in 1304 Wallace offered to make peace with

* "He was one day (at Trifels,) answered from without by a well-known voice, that of Blondel his minstrel, who had probably been sent from England to convey information to the king, and to gain intelligence of his situation."—*History of England*, i. p. 192. Richard was not in Trifels till Easter, and the two English abbots had met and conversed with him on his way thither.

† Knyghton, *De event. Angliæ*, l. ii. apud Twisden x. *Scriptores*, &c. p. 2408.

the king provided he was secured in a good estate. Edward in a rage devoted to the fiend him and all who should sustain him, and set a reward of three hundred marks on his head. Wallace was betrayed some time after by his man Jack Schort (whose brother he had slain) to sir John Monteith, who took him one nigh "his leman bi." At London he was drawn, hanged, embowelled while still alive, and quartered; just, we may add, as David prince of Wales had been, and as was the barbarous usage of the age toward all who were executed as traitors.

Langtoft being his authority, one is surprised to read in Tytler (*Hist. of Scot. i.*) that "Wallace was *betrayed* and taken by sir John Monteith." To whom did he *betray* him? Again, he says, "the circumstances of refined cruelty and torment which attended his execution reflect an indelible stain on the character of Edward, and, were they not stated by the English historians themselves, could scarcely be credited." Why not credited? Edward looked on Wallace as a rebel and murderer, and punished him in the usual manner.

Hemingford commences his account of Wallace thus: "*Erat quidam latro publicus Willelmus Walays nomine.*" Trivet's account of him is to the same effect. Walsingham says, "*Hic, ex infima gente procreatus, processu temporis factus est vir sagittarius, illius artis peritia quæritans victum suum.*"

The riming chronicler Hardyng gives a peculiar account of the capture of Wallace. He says that Robert Umfreville earl of Angus defeated in a battle in Argyle Wallace and his brother John, and brought them prisoners to London, where they were hanged as traitors.

Such are the English accounts of Wallace. The Scottish historian Fordun, whose chronicle ends in 1385 (eighty years after Wallace), introduces him thus: "*Eodem anno (1296) Willelmus Walace quasi de latibulo caput levavit et vicecomitem de Lanark, Anglicum virum strenuum et potentem in villa de Lanark, interfecit.*" He says that Wallace was of a good family. Wintoun, a later writer than Fordun (his chronicle ends in 1408), gives a curious dialogue on this occasion between Wallace and the viscount.

In the later narratives of Blind Harry, Hector Boece and Buchanan, the deeds of Wallace are expanded and embellished in the usual manner.

On the whole we shall perhaps have the most exact idea of Wallace if we compare him with the partisans or guerillas of Spain. The following passage of Mackintosh (i. 262) exalts him, we think, far too much:—"His name stands brightly forward among the foremost of men, with Vasa, with the two Williams of Orange, with Washington, with Kosciusko, with his own more fortunate but less pure successor Robert Bruce. His spirit survived him in Scotland. The nation, shaken to its deepest foundations by a hero who came into contact with

them, and who conquered by them alone, retained the impulse which his mighty arm had communicated."

Q, page 248.

ROBERT BRUCE.

According to Fordun and Wintoun, Bruce and Comyn had previously agreed on insurrection. Bruce, being summoned to the court of England, was in London, when Comyn wrote secretly to Edward giving him information of the plot. Edward charged Bruce with it; he denied it; the king appeared satisfied, but he formed a secret determination to put him to death. That very night, when Bruce was at supper, his friend the earl of Gloucester (Gloverniæ) sent his chamberlain to him with twelve pennies and a pair of spurs; the money, he was told, was in payment of what he had lent the earl the day before. Bruce understood the enigmatic warning; he lost no time in making his escape to Scotland. On the borders he met a man whose appearance was suspicious; he slew him, and found on him letters from Comyn to Edward, and he now fully resolved to punish him for his treachery.

Of this journey to Scotland, we may observe, Langtoft and Hemingford say not a word. The tale gradually received additions; the pennies become crowns of gold; Bruce has a groom; there is a fall of snow; the horses are shod with the shoes reversed. Thus was formed the narrative we may read in Buchanan, and from him in Hume.

R, page 265.

MURDERERS OF EDWARD II.

"According to the judgement of the house of peers in 1330, Mortimer commanded (he confessed it before his death, Rot. Parl. ii. 62), Gournay and Ogle perpetrated the murder. Mortimer suffered death; the other two had fled out of the kingdom; but a reward of 100*l.* was offered for the apprehension, or of 100 marks for the head, of Gournay; and another reward of 100 marks for the apprehension, and of 40*l.* for the head, of Ogle (*Id.* ii. 54). What became of Ogle I know not; Gournay fled into Spain, and was apprehended by the magistrates of Burgos. At the request of the king of England he was examined by them in the presence of an English envoy. What disclosures he made were kept secret, as the messengers who had him in charge received orders to behead him at sea on his way to England (Rymer, iv. 488-491). With respect to lord Berkeley, he was tried at his own demand by a jury of knights and acquitted. The king, however, ordered him to be put under the custody of sir Ralph Neville till the next parliament, for having placed officers

of a bad character about the person of his father (Rot. Parl. ii. 57). But in that parliament, at the request of the lords, he was permitted to be at large till the truth could be learned from Gournay, *who was still alive*, but not yet arrived from Spain (*Id.* ii. 62). From these words it is probable that Ogle died before the capture of Gournay."—Lingard.

Mr. Hunter, in a paper read to the Society of Antiquarians in 1838, has shown from original documents that Gournay escaped from those who took him at Burgos; but that sometime after he was discovered and arrested at Naples, and he died at Bayonne on his way to England, whither it appears every care was taken that he should be brought alive.

S, page 294.

CRUELTY OF THE BLACK PRINCE.

Occasional barbarity was not incompatible with the virtues of chivalry, as the following incident will show. When the Black Prince heard of the revolt of the city of Limoges, "then," says Froissart, he "swore by his father's soule, whereby he was never forsworne, that he wolde gette it agayne, and that he wolde make the traytours derely abyte their falsnesse." The city was taken by mine, and the prince issued orders to give no quarter. "It was great pytie," says the chronicler, "to se the men, women and chyldren that kneeled downe on their knees before the prince for mercy; but he was so inflamed with yre that he toke no hede to theym, so that none was herde, but all putte to dethe as they were mette withal, and suche as were nothing culpable. There was no pytie taken of the poore people who wrought never no maner of treason, yet they bought it dearerr than the great personages suche as had done the yvell and trespase. There was not so harde a hert within the cytie of Lymoges and yf he had any remembraunce of God but that wepte pyteously for the great mischefe that they sawe before their eyen: for mo than three thousand men, women and chyldren were slayne and beheaded that day: God have mercy on their soules! for I trowe they were martyrs."

We would not have it supposed that atrocities of this nature were peculiar to those times. Unfortunately they are to be found in the annals of all ages, and the storm and massacre at Limoges were but trifles compared with the sack of Magdeburg by count Tilly in the Thirty Years' War, and those of Oczakow and Warsaw by the Russians in 1788 and 1795, to say nothing of the ravage of the Palatinate by the troops of Louis XIV. in 1689. Even Cromwell massacred the whole garrison and a large number of the inhabitants of Drogheda in Ireland. Our object in noticing the barbarity of the Black Prince is to remove the erroneous impression produced by poets and romance-writers of the

'Age of Chivalry' as being a period in which courtesy, generosity, humanity and all the virtues showed with peculiar lustre, than which nothing can be more remote from the truth.

T, page 301.

ADDRESSES OF THE INSURGENTS.

The leaders of the insurgents adopted the practice usual in such cases of giving themselves fictitious names. Such were Jack Straw, Jack Mylner (Miller), Jack Carter, Jack Trueman, &c., under which names they put forth addresses such as the following (Knighton *ap.* Twisden, p. 2634):

"Jakke Mylner asket help to turne his mylne [mill] aright. He hath grounden smal smal; the king's sone of heven he scal pay for alle. Loke thy mylne go aryght with the foure sayles and the post stand in steadfastnesse. With ryght and with myght, with skyl and with wylle, let myght help ryght, and skyl go before wylle and ryght before myght, then goth oure mylne aryght. And if myght go before ryght, and wylle before skylle, then is our mylne mys a dyght [dight amiss]."

"Jakke Carter preys yowe alle that ye make a gode ende of that ye have begunnen, and doth wole and aye bettur and bettur, for al the even men heryth the day. For if the ende be wele then is alle wele. Lat Peres [Piers] the Plowman my brother dwelle at home and dyght us corne, and I will go with yowe and help that y may to dyght youre mete and youre drynke that ye now fayle. Lokke that Hobbe robb-youre be wele chastysed for lesing of youre grace, for ye have gret nede to take God with yowe in alle youre dedes; for nowe is tyme to be war [ware]."

The following is one of Ball's addresses:

"John Balle Seynte Marye prist greteth wele alle maner men, and byddes hem in the name of the Trinite, Fadur and Sone and Holy Gost, stond manlycke togedyr in trewthe, and helpeth trewthe and trewthe schal helpe yowe. Now regneth pride in pris, and covetise is holde wys; and lecherye with outen shame, and glotonye with outen blame; Envye regneth with tresone, and slouthe is take in grete sesone. God do bote, for now is tyme. Amen."

U, page 330.

RICHARD II.

Mr. Tytler (History of Scotland, iii.) has revived an old story in Fordun and Wintoun of Richard II. having escaped from prison and being maintained for twenty years at the court of Scotland. There is no

doubt that a person who pretended to be, or rather was made to personate, that monarch, was countenanced there (as Warbeck was afterwards), and probably with a view to annoy Henry, whose seizure of prince James may perhaps thus be best explained.

Sir James Mackintosh (*History of England*, i. 381) has briefly, but we think completely, confuted Mr. Tytler. See also Mr. Amyot's *Dissertations* on this subject in the *Archæologia*, vols. xxiii. and xxv.

W, page 403.

MURDER OF THE PRINCES BY RICHARD III.

It is well known that the truth of this account of the murder of the princes has been questioned by Buck, Carte, Walpole, and Laing. Their arguments have, we think, been amply confuted by Hume and Lingard. We will here notice the principal ones, and the replies to them; first stating the evidence for the murder.

The historian of Croyland, who wrote in 1486, the year after Richard's death, says that when Buckingham and the others had entered into a confederacy to release the princes, "*vulgatum est dictos Edwardi filios, quo genere violenti interitus ignoratur, decessisse in fata.*" He also says that their cause had been avenged in the battle of Bosworth, and that Richard, not content with obtaining his brother's treasures, destroyed his offspring (*oppressit proles*). This writer could not then have doubted of the murder. Rouse, who died in 1491, says that Richard imprisoned Edward and his brother closely, and within little more than two months killed them, but so secretly that "*post paucissimis notum fuit qua morte martyrizati sunt.*" André, the historiographer of Henry VII., says, "*ferro feriri jussit.*" More in 1513 gave the narrative in the text from the confession of the assassins.

Buckingham and his friends must have been certain of the death of the princes, or they would never have offered the crown to Henry on condition of his marrying Elizabeth; and what reason could Richard himself have for wishing to marry her if she were not now the representative of her father?

In the year 1674 a chest containing bones answering in size to those of the two princes was found by the workmen who were taking away the staircase leading from the king's lodging to the Tower chapel. It was ten feet under ground.

Against all this it is alleged that for many years after it was doubted if they were dead. "Some remain yet in doubt," says More, "whether they were in Richard's days destroyed or not." "In vulgus fama valet," says Polydore Virgil, "*filios Edwardi regis aliquo terrarum secreto migrasse atque ibi superstites esse.*" Bacon also mentions the "rumours and whisperings" of one of them at least being alive. The wonder how-

ever to any one versed in history, and who recollects the stories of Richard II., of Don Sebastian, and others, would be if such reports did *not* prevail.

Walpole endeavours to show from the rolls of parliament that Edward V. was living in 1484, and that therefore the tale of his being put to death during Richard's progress in 1483 cannot be true; but Lingard observes, that what he quotes is from the petition presented at Baynard's castle, and only proves what was never doubted, that Edward was then alive.

But the grand argument is this. There are in Rymer two instruments dated August 31, "*teste rege apud Wesmonasterium.*" Richard therefore was in London on that day, and we know that he was crowned at York on September 8th; there was no time then for the passage of all the messengers to and from London, and the whole story in the text is a fiction. Lingard however shows that this only proves that the chancellor was at Westminster. He gives as an instance; there are thirty-three writs of Edward V. *teste rege* at Westminster April 23rd, yet we know that he did not reach London till May 4th, and did not go to Westminster at all.

X, page 406.

LETTER OF ELIZABETH.

The original letter from Elizabeth to the duke of Norfolk we believe no longer exists, but Buck, who saw it in the cabinet of the earl of Arundel, states that in it she desired the duke "to be a mediator for her to the king in the behalf of the marriage propounded between them, who was her only joy and maker in this world, and that she was his in heart and thought, withal insinuating that the better part of February was past, and that she feared the queen would never die."

Y, page 438.

PERKIN WARBECK.

The advocates of Perkin Warbeck say that—1. He was acknowledged by the kings of France and Scotland, and the duchess of Burgundy; 2. Henry never confronted him with the queen, her mother and sisters; 3. His accent was perfectly English; 4. He was like the duke of York; 5. Henry never inquired into the circumstances of the murder of the princes.

To all this it is replied that,—1. The king of France acted from political motives, so most probably did the king of Scotland; the object of the duchess of Burgundy, who had already favoured Simnel, probably was

to overthrow Henry and establish the claims of her nephew Warwick. 2. See above, p. 437. The royal ladies had abundant opportunities of seeing him. 3 and 4 are mere assertions, without any proofs being offered. 5. It is probable that Henry considered the fact of the death of the princes too well established to require any proof; or himself, as a Lancastrian, not called on to punish the domestic crimes of the house of York.

Finally, few but those who were outlaws adhered to Warbeck, and no gentleman ever joined him in his various invasions of England. That Henry would never have left him at liberty if he thought him in the slightest degree dangerous, is proved by his very different treatment of the earl of Warwick.

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